

LISTENING TO NATURE

Towards a holistic negotiation framework



ABSTRACT

LISTENING TO NATURE:

Towards a holistic negotiation framework

**My experience in the development of the handbook for the incorporation
of the Jagera Cultural Heritage Values into Brisbane City Planning**

This thesis travels through the creation and implementation of a research process for the design of a protocol of understanding between The Brisbane City Council (BCC) and the Jagera Traditional Owners Association Incorporated (The Jagera). The experience of the journey aims to contribute in the development of an approach that facilitates the job of those who are working in the construction of agreements among government and Aboriginal communities.

In its construction, this thesis takes a holistic approach that incorporates the characteristics of Indigenous informal learning as understood by Christie (1985): the understanding of the world as something intrinsically meaningful and the learning through the day-to-day process of socialisation. The result is the construction of a metaphor around which the thesis is developed.

The metaphor contains three stories that show how a natural process common to all beings (birth-relate-create) may take place in each of them. One of the stories regards the creation of an application for funding, another, the creation of a plant, and finally the creation of the research process for a handbook and its implementation. As they are set in a holistic approach, each of them are developed simultaneously and interconnected in each chapter.

This journey demonstrates how a common principle found in nature can be applied in the development of a research process, one whose aim is to create an agreement between Aboriginal people and local government.

ABSTRACT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Does 'original work' truly exist? If we think about all the people that in some way or another have contributed to the fulfilment of this work, and have left a footprint on it, then, we have to think twice about it being called original. This thesis belongs to them as it belongs to me. But the best of this situation is that their footprint is not just on this thesis, is in my heart and in my life. I know that this heart of mine will not be able to express all his feelings and tell you how thankful he is for your companionship and support in this journey, but let me do my best in translating what he wants to say in the phrase 'thanks to':

To my family, especially to my mom who I owe all, my sister who came to see if I was going well when I really needed it and to those of them who have been near notwithstanding the distance.

To all my fellows of the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences, to Gai Harrison who was a light that let me see this new place as a world full of possibilities. To Paul and Tony, who helped me filling the first grant application-form. To Ingrid, who has the patience to understand my thoughts and helps me to see the earth when I am in the sky. To my friends of the 'dungeon' with whom I not only share a place, but also ideas, moments and experiences, that have made this place safe, supportive and rich in happiness; thanks to Karen, Akiko, Jane, Lina, Diana, Bagus, Jook, Zebith, Deb and Mike, Helen, Mark, Kyline, Jaz, Agnes, Wendy, Yuka, Ashford and finally Ryan (whose visits have made him part

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of this place). To Katijah who patiently read my work and wisely advised and supported me in this journey. To Mandy whom without her help the thesis could never be understood.

To Tjanara, that opened the door of this Aboriginal land and showed me to love it, while making me hopeful to know this land and its people more deeply. And for indirectly introducing me to Madona, Caroline and the Jagera Traditional Owners, who have let me be their friend and share aspirations.

And to the ones that have fed my soul with their joy and happiness, the ones that have made this place a familiar one, those who have celebrated happy moments and have stood together in the hard ones. To the holder of the smile of sunshine with whom I share sunsets, happiness, sadness and dreams, she who made me curious about the world of science, she without whom this city would not be such a wonderful and inspiring place. To the music man, whose advise is always welcome and with whom I have the chance to recreate tastes and images of my city. To the best trip organizer, who makes a huge effort in understanding my Spanish. To the one with whom I daily laugh and talk about the day, before going to bed and often at breakfast. To the dream analyser, who share the thoughts that people rarely understand. And to the one that even far away is always close, she that appeared when I most needed her, to make the things easier and encourage me to keep going. To all of them and the one who always is.

What strikes me is the fact that, in our society, art is now only linked to objects, rather than to individuals or life itself. This kind of art is specialized, or produced by experts who are artist.

But couldn't we ourselves, each one of us, make of our life a work of art? Why should a lamp or a house become the object of art and not our own lives?

Foucault

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INTRODUCTION

The recognition of custodial exercise and the significance given by the Aboriginal community to a site in the solution of issues of land tenure, have increased the importance of the participation of Aboriginal people in cultural heritage management (Ellis, 1994).

Regulations such as the Environmental Protection Act, The Integrated Planning Act, the Cultural Heritage Landscapes Act, and the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act recognize the importance of Indigenous heritage management. As well, some inclusive models used when development projects involve cultural heritage analysis, for example the Dawson River dam, have avoided expensive confrontation and conflict (Godwin 1997 p.6), but also highlight the need to explore options and to better define the issues of inclusive approaches.

Most of the literature (Ellis, 1994, Young, 2001, O'Faircheallaigh, 1998, Walsh, 2002) agrees that participation by Aboriginal people in the things that concern planning and management of cultural heritage is essential, but there exists limited information about how this goal can be achieved. This is something that can only be defined by the government and the Aboriginal community who wish to exercise this right.

At the end of July 2003 I became involved as research facilitator in the development of a handbook to define a protocol of understanding that incorporates Indigenous cultural heritage values of the Jagera People into local government planning with the Brisbane City Council. The handbook looks to facilitate the incorporation of Indigenous aspirations related to cultural heritage in the planning of the city, so that their values are respected and they can continue their traditions and practices. This handbook will define a protocol of understanding among the Jagera and the Brisbane City Council in relation to the management and assessment of cultural heritage.

The creation of the protocol of understanding will answer the question of how the Brisbane City Council and the Jagera can work together in the planning and management of sites of cultural heritage significance. This thesis explores the question of how we can make that sort of protocol and it also aims to define a process of research that achieves that goal.

Due to the characteristics of the research, the process for the development of the handbook on cultural heritage is, as well, a negotiation process between the government and Aboriginal people. The difficulties in developing these sort of agreements have been highlighted before. Ivanitz (1997) explains that negotiation does not stop with the final agreement and that it continues through all its application and interpretation. The difficulties are not only derived from the difference of power among the subjects (Ivanitz, 1997), but also from trying to put together two different ways of understanding the world (Wensing 1999).

The work involved in the development of such agreements is about bridging two different cultures, two different ways of understanding the world and balancing in harmony the power of those involved. The researcher finds himself needing to bridge those gaps for himself as well and needing to find an appropriate methodology that incorporates an Aboriginal and a Western view. Unfortunately as Walker (2001 p.11) affirms:

Most of the research methodologies that have been clearly articulated within academic text are based on Western worldview and exclude experiences which many Indigenous scholars find to be integral part of their experience. Prayers, ceremony, relationship with the natural world, dreams and intuition, are seldom articulated within western epistemologies and methodologies.

To overcome this difficulty, in the design of the process of research and development of this thesis, I decided to do it in a way that attempts to conciliate those paradigms and also enables me to open my understanding to different cultures. Probably this can be seen as a way of decolonizing myself as a start of decolonizing the academy, which Walker (2001) in her PHD thesis suggests as an idea for further research.

In fact, as Smith states (1999 p.124) the activities involved in research are carried out by people that have been trained and socialized in a certain way of thinking, defining and making sense of the known and unknown. From this statement, what becomes essential for those like myself who have been educated in a Western system, is to move outside of it in order to be able to achieve a perspective suitable for the conditions in which the research is evolving.

As Peile (1994 p.199) affirms, theory, practice and research are not different moments of a sequential process, they are all explicit or implicit in any given moment. Therefore if we want to recognize Aboriginal values we have to recognize them in the research. To do that, I have examined the elements that are representative in Aboriginal knowledge and undertaken the research incorporating them in my approach. This thesis also aims to demonstrate that such an approach is an effective one to create a research process and negotiation process to construct an agreement between government and Indigenous people.

One of the distinguishing elements of an Aboriginal world view is that it has a “fundamentally different ontological basis: “the Universe is fraught with meaning. It was meaningful the day it was given to us... This is the meaning which unites peoples with their songs and their land” (Christie 1985 p.41). From this perspective Aboriginal people see the world as something intrinsically meaningful and most of their knowledge is learned through the “day-to-day process of socialization” (Christie 1985 p.43).

Other important characteristics of traditional informal learning according to Christie (1987 p.45) are learning from observation and imitation as well as learning in context, and being person oriented not information oriented. Considering the above, the thesis adopts a number of approaches that attempt to incorporate the characteristics of traditional informal learning in our process of research which are explained next:

- Understanding the universe as something interconnected: To do that the observation of nature is done using biosemiotics, an academic paradigm used in Biology that recognize life in the universe as something interconnected “from which the life sphere is permeated by sign processes (semiosis) and signification” (Bouissac 1998).

A lack of literature that explores the world as a living entity, has been highlight by Walker (2001) as one of the limitations in Aboriginal studies. I hope that the use of the semiotic paradigm can help to overcome this situation.

A clear example of the application of this approach can be observed in the thesis when it bases its structure in a natural process common to all things, which is explained in the first chapter.

- Presenting stories of day-to-day life: The primary data starts from daily life experiences that narrate my first approach to the Aboriginal people who I work with. This story appears in the Birth part of each chapter, in addition to this story, along the chapters it appears stories of day-life that can exemplify what is being presented.

The literature that highlights the importance of the use of stories in research is abundant, (Stringer, 1996, Reason, 2001, Nash, 1994), the first chapter will talk further on this matter and why we are encouraging the use of them in this thesis.

- Observing nature rather than analysing it: My observations intend to be not an explanation of the universe, but an understanding of how it works and how can we fit into the same process. As Cajete (2000 p.79) states, the ultimate aim of native science is not to explain a unified universe, but to learn about responsibilities and relationships and celebrate those that we establish with the world.

The common process that is narrated in the first chapter and that is followed along the thesis is observed and applied in action towards the incorporation of those principles in the creation of an attitude and a process that allow us to relate in the same creative way the universe does to ensure life.

- Applying knowledge in context and being person oriented: The primary objective of the thesis is to create something that can be useful (the process of research-negotiation that will be used), not to find general statements. This approach to research has proved to be a legitimate avenue of investigation in Action Research, whose principles are fully accepted as a “way to provide knowledge that makes a difference” based on the

assumption that social knowledge is “a continually changing cultural creation” (Stringer, 1996 p.146).

The simple routine of Action Research Look-Think-Act is applied along the thesis, the create part of each chapter is the story of the action taken after those observation.

- Using metaphors: Cajete (2000 p.79) affirms that metaphors accomplish an essential job by facilitating the creative process of native science as “it invents, integrates and applies the deep levels of human perception and intuition to the task of living”.

These five approaches have been incorporated in this thesis which is constructed around a metaphor that is explained in chapter I called “A Process”. This metaphor involves all the elements of the thesis the style, the structure and the content. It is my wish that somehow every single element of the above mentioned and all of them together say something about the process.

It is important to highlight that as part of the metaphor around which this thesis is constructed, things are expected to make sense at the end not at the beginning. This was something that we experimented in our process of research and development of the handbook. To present them in a different way in this thesis would be against the truth.

As part of the metaphor in this introduction we are creating a protocol of understanding to match a linear thesis construction with the one used here, which intends to be a holistic approach to investigation.

Now that I have presented how I expect to incorporate a holistic perspective in the development of this thesis, which will be farther explained in the first chapter, I will explain how this thesis meets the requirements of a standard postgraduate thesis suggested by the Teaching and Educational Development Institute of the University of Queensland for the Queensland Higher Education Staff Development Consortium 1997.

Below are the questions that a thesis must answer according to this institute, how they are answered in the commonly used structure and how they are answered in this thesis.

Table 1. Comparison of Thesis structures

Questions	Standard	Thesis
Why am I doing it?	Introduction significance	Introduction
What is known? What is Unknown?	Review of research Identifying gaps	Introduction
What do I hope to discover?	Aims	Introduction, Chapter I. A Process
How am I going to discover it?	Methodology	Chapter I. A process
What have I found?	Results	Chapter I. A Process, each Birth part of each chapter and the 1 st Relate part of each chapter
What does it mean?	Discussion	2 nd relate part of each chapter
What are possible applications or recommendations? What contribution does it makes to knowledge?	Conclusions	Create part of each chapter.

As it is shown in table (1) above, each chapter presents results, discussion and conclusions. The results present stories of day-to-day life in the Birth part of each chapter and observations of natural process that appears in the first part of the Relate part of each chapter. The discussion is done in the second Relate part of each chapter, with the analysis of the observations of the story and nature and the existing literature in community development, to end with the conclusions applied in a context that is the construction of our process of research.

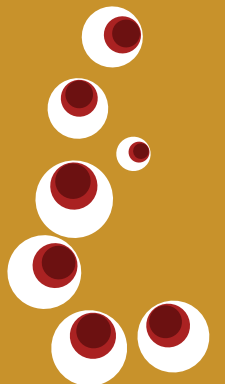
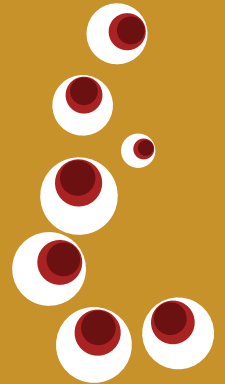
Before I let you go further, I would like to say one more thing. During the reading of the thesis you will find an often use of the pronoun 'we'. In my culture and especially in my case, I find difficult to understand the world without the other and that is the reason why the thesis is mostly written using this plural pronoun. Some times by using 'we' I refer to the things we have experienced in the story in which I take part, an I also use it pretending that you and me are reading together. Please consider that in any case I am assuming you agree with my opinions.

This is as far as this introduction can go, the next chapter starts incorporating all the elements that have been presented and will explain further the content of each chapter.

CHAPTER I: A PROCESS

(Structure and organisation of the thesis)

“Every living being is in process, which is simply the flow, the stream of its life journey. Such processes are both archetypal –sharing commonality of pattern with all beings, such as gestation, birth, death and resurrection- as well as unique to the particular being.” (Kaplan 2002)



I. A Natural Process

I picked up a vague mystical feeling... that we must look for the same sort fields of natural phenomena- that we might expect to find the same sort of laws at work in the structure of a crystal as in the structure of society, or that segmentation an of an earth-worm might really be comparable to the process by which basalt pillars are formed.
(Bateson in Berman 1984 p.196)

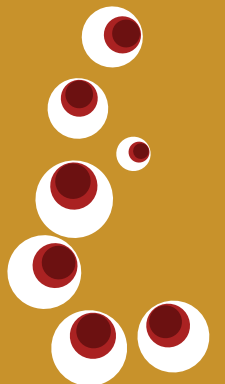
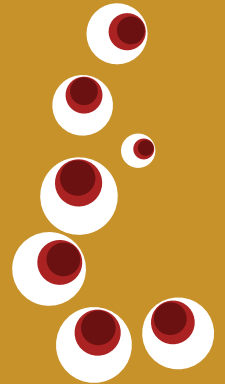
If we take a minute or probably some minutes to have a look and listen to the world that surrounds us, we will notice a common process immersed in the life of this world.

I remember in my early years of primary school I was taught that all living things, are born, grow reproduce and die; but at the same time someone said, that energy is not created or destroyed but only transformed. Were not these living things full of energy so why do they die? What a confusion for a child!

But if we observe carefully we will realize that there exists a simple cycle that repeats itself infinitely in all things of this world, a cycle with three simple phases birth – relate – create that at the end is a new birth.

For example, let's think of a flower seed. Imagine it, lying on the ground. Then something inside it is telling it to grow, and to look for those things that will help it to achieve its goal. It starts to feed from inside but later on the food is not enough and it will have to look outside of itself. It will have to start a reciprocal relationship with the soil, which will provide the food and water and in turn the flower will protect the soil from erosion. This relationship will keep on going with other elements, making it possible for the plant to grow and later on pollinate, a beautiful fruit will then give birth to a new plant as well as an amazing variety of relationships.

Let us consider another field- Chemistry. The molecule of water has one oxygen needing two electrons to share its outer orbit, then two atoms of hydrogen volunteer their electrons to fill that space. They relate and from that relation water is created.





Not enough? How is a painting made? An artist, nature, the model or what ever, relate and create a painting.

What a simple but essential process. It allow us to create an infinite variety of things, completely diverse, yet completely related.

II. An Approach

"Thus on a conscious level we largely spend our lives finding out what we already know on an unconscious level."

Berman, 1984 p130

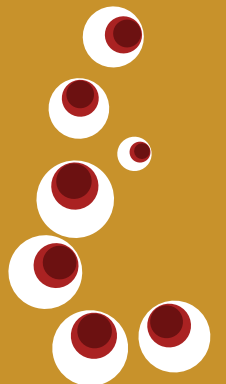
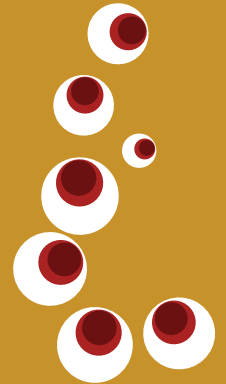
2.1 Seeing Holistically



Each step in the natural process just presented, well known by all of us consciously or unconsciously, has shamefully been studied separately, not only divided by the different science methods and interests but also divided in subject and object.

This fragmentation has brought us to a general confusion of the mind and indeed as Bohm affirms (1980 p.7) this has created "an endless series of problems and interferes with our clarity of perception so seriously as to prevent us from being able to solve most of them".

In this thesis I would like to tackle the walls that do not let us think holistically, this means seeing the connections (Kaplan 1996). As in "Las Meninas" of Velázquez, which Foucault (1994) takes as a point of departure to talk about the order of things. Las Meninas is a portrait in which while one is looking at it one feels that one is being seen. This portrait make us feel that we are in the picture but can not define if we are watching or being watched.



I am not so ambitious to wish to be a Velazquez, but I will do my best to structure and write this work in a way that while you are reading it, you can feel that you are interacting and exercising your ability to find connections in everything.

I would like to travel with you in a holistic way, in a way to find connections. Let us go beyond the boundaries established by Science, let us think not in terms of social scientist or physics or any scientific terms, let us think in more human terms, and let us find those commonalities that exist in a plant as well as in a society, in any sort of relationship!

Wisdom is not a privilege left to the scientist. Wisdom is something that any ordinary man can achieve.

I do not want to make a cookbook on how to make a handbook on local government planning and Indigenous cultural heritage. A good chef does not need a cookbook, he/she only needs to know the connections, to know what goes with what. If garlic can go together with lemon, prawns and chilly; but not beans, he/she knows how to relate, how to create, how to discover a new way of cooking any dish he/she prepares. He/she has developed a way of thinking not based in description and impression but in an “intuitive grasp of essential relations” (Coleman in Bernman 1984).

2.2 Why not a cookbook?

Is there a method of procedure? Look, Sir- I get up, walk a few paces and go down the steps. Is that a method of procedure? I just get up and do it naturally, I don't invent a method first and I follow it- I see it. You can't reduce everything to a method
Krishnamurti (1972 p.157)

As mentioned before, this thesis might present a way to construct protocols of understanding among Indigenous communities and local government. This means matching two completely different ways of understanding the reality.

Certainly we have to acknowledge that each community will have a different way of relating with the government as each community is different. Similarly



the relationship that a plant of corn has with the soil is different from the one a bean plant has. In consequence, each community will engage differently in the development of that protocol.

Therefore, the conditions of each relationship define the way each process of research has to be designed. There is no defined way to do it, but there are attitudes, intuitions that help us to be creative with the community, and that is what is intended to be developed in this handbook.

2.3 And how do we develop intuition and attitudes to be creative?

Before going further, I would just like to say that all of us have intuition and we use it in our daily life, especially when we need to understand different points of view. To understand how we use intuition, in this part we will start a journey into the organisation of our mind and how the creation of paradigms shapes our behaviour, attitudes and ways of understanding reality. Then we will explore different ways of escaping from these paradigms and bridge different ones to widen our understanding of the world and each other. This journey hopefully will provide us with the necessary elements to construct a process of research that allows the development of intuition and attitudes and in turn encourages creativity.

2.3.1 The Paradigms

Each person is a different universe. Two persons watching a movie will have two completely different experiences of the same film, but they will be able to talk about that movie and enjoy the time together. They might chat about their points of view and construct a new experience. I reckon that it does not necessarily happen all the time. There might be times when we may not be able to cope with the differences and probably will not go to the movies together again. This has happened to me, and it is probably a good idea to share that experience here.

One day I invited a girl to see a movie called Leolo. I heard from a friend that it was good and it was awarded some prizes at a film festival. Though the

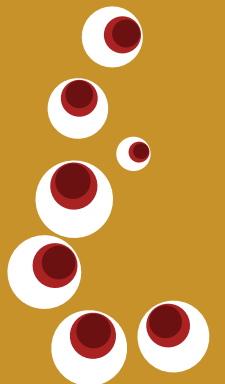
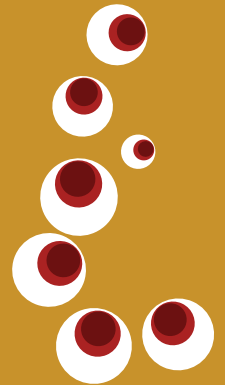
movie had many scenes that some people could consider obscene, I thought that it expressed in a very beautiful way the hard life lived by this boy, and how he could cope because of his determination to reach his dreams. However, my friend thought the movie was nasty and completely crazy. At the end of the movie I said it was wonderful, she looked at me like she was thinking this guy is depraved, and I saw her thinking... this ignoramus! We never talked about that again, and in fact we did not go to the movies nor to any other place together again.


It is clear that there are many different ways to perceive reality, each one framed by a paradigm, a system that validates itself and understands itself in its own ways. As Berman affirms (1984 p.222) "Individuals and societies are organized entities; They are "coded" in a certain way that is coherent, that make sense in both, emotional and cognitive sense." (Berman 1984 p.212)

To understand this better let us see how this works in science description and explanation. Both, are connected by something that is called *Tautology*, which is also the way the paradigm works, Bateson (1985 p.83) defines tautology as:

A body of propositions so linked together that the links between the propositions are necessarily valid. The simplest tautology is if P is true, then P is true. A more complex *tautology* would be "If Q follows from P, then Q follows from P, from there you can build into whatever complexity you like but you are still within the domain of the *if* clause provided not by data but by *you*."

In the example of the movie my appreciation of the film was determined by many factors, most of them influenced by my friends that were journalism or cinematography students who taught me to appreciate the wholeness of the movie. Whereas, probably my friend was influenced by a paradigm which made her feel embarrassed or uncomfortable watching obscene scenes in a movie.





When we establish a considered classification, when we say that a cat and a dog resemble each other less than two greyhounds do, even if both are tame or embalmed... even if both have just broken the water pitcher, what is the ground on which we are able to establish the validity of this classification with complete certainty? (Foucault 1970 p. XIX)

The paradigm is not the reality; it is just that, a paradigm one of many possibilities.

2.3.2 Escaping the Paradigm

Here what seems to be a way of escaping the paradigms based on the search for commonalities and different ways to do that such as analogies and stories, is presented.

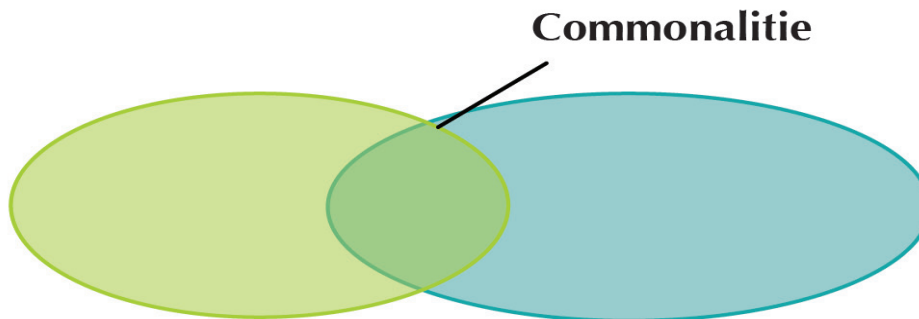
2.3.2.1 Finding Commonalities among the Paradigms

The first step to deal with and conciliate two different paradigms is by being conscious of the existence of them and the belief that they are all equally valid. Without this first step we cannot go any further. Then we will be able to find that among these different paradigms commonalities (elements shared in common) exist.

For instance going back to the story of the movie-date presented above, I thought that some scenes were obscene as well, and probably she had thought that some of the poems presented were nice.

The recognition of those commonalities helps us to relate with others' paradigms and construct a bridge that allows them to come together in a common understanding, continue our relationship and expand our appreciation of the reality.

Table 2. Commonalities

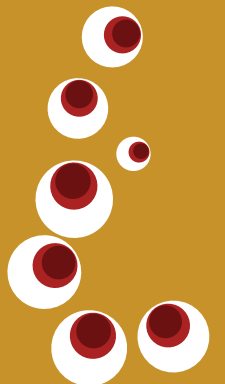
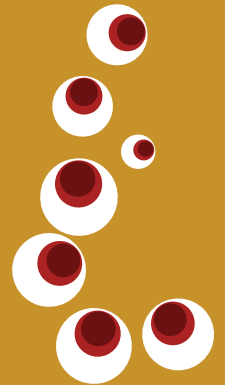


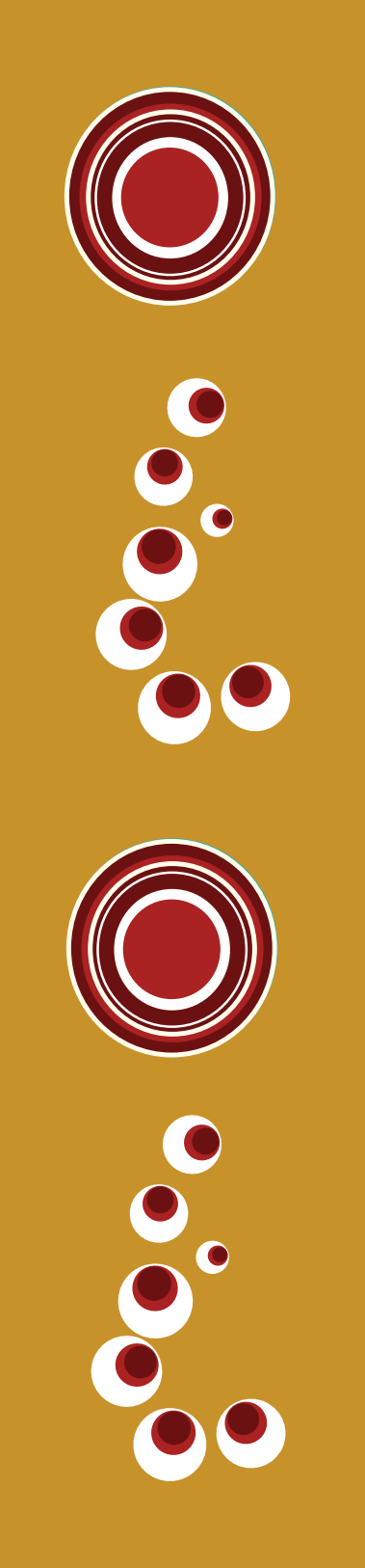
2.3.2.2 The Use of Analogies

Analogies are the translation of something external to something familiar. We have already gone through some of them in this chapter. The analogies come as a point of intersection of two different realities, one that we know with others that we ignore.

The analogies find the points in which two paradigms connect. Using them we are able to situate those paradigms in a meta-paradigm broader than them. This is a way to get closer to the wholeness.

The above explanation of the different paradigms, was made in two different ways, one scientific based on statements and logic and other from an analogy with my experience of the date at the movies, probably this last one did not give an exact definition, but it gave a sense of how each person understands the reality



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in a different way and what it was like to deal with two different paradigms. It interconnected that abstract definition of the paradigm to something familiar, enabling us to perceive those connections that go beyond the paradigms¹.

2.3.2.3 The Use of Stories

The use of analogies gives us a taste of the wholeness. We build stories, small sometimes but yet stories, in which it is not so important if the facts are real, what matters is that they make sense, their truth is defined “based on a comparison with common sense knowledge” (Jackson in Nash 1994 p.29), a knowledge that comes from our own experience of the whole reality.

In narrative we analyse things in context; as Berman (1970 p.248, 219) affirms, “meaning is virtually synonymous with context... as the vast majority of metamesages remain implicit”. The stories set us on the stage and send us to the complexity of reality, a reality in which we can observe relations that at the same time we find in our daily life.

Beyond technical definitions, stories cultivate a level of intimacy between people, with the teller inviting the listener to engage in a transaction, an exchange of meaning and participation in interpretation. Burkett (2003 p.3)

From this exchange a bridge that connects our reality with the one of the story is built, and that learning about making bridges is what is needed when we want to make protocols of understanding that link two completely different ways of working.

¹ Batenson (1985 p.108) gives an interesting example of this by showing the difference between two descriptions of a circuit, one in which he describes how variables act upon another and one describe the system as a whole

2.3.3 The development of the thesis

And now that we have seen that there exists many different paradigms that shape our behaviour and that one way to escape from them is finding commonalities which can be done through analogies in the form of stories and metaphors, we do have a clue about the way we should develop this thesis.

Henceforth, instead of providing a set of steps that introduce the reader to our paradigm, we recognize and respect the existence of different paradigms, and our only ambition is to share an experience with the reader where the use of natural intuition relates it with the reality experienced by the reader.

To achieve this, the handbook is constructed in a metaphor, the cycle: birth-relate-create-birth. First our story from my diary notes, that can be replaced with any story the reader would like to relate. Then the relation is made using an analogy with the natural process and different technics of community development and community planning. Finally, the creation involves the birth of the process of research.

The birth relate-create-cycle shapes the three parts of the handbook and the chapters in this thesis as follows:

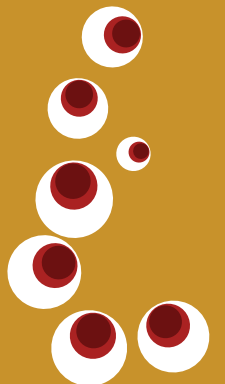
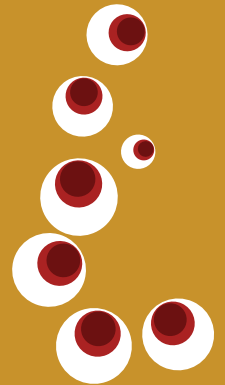
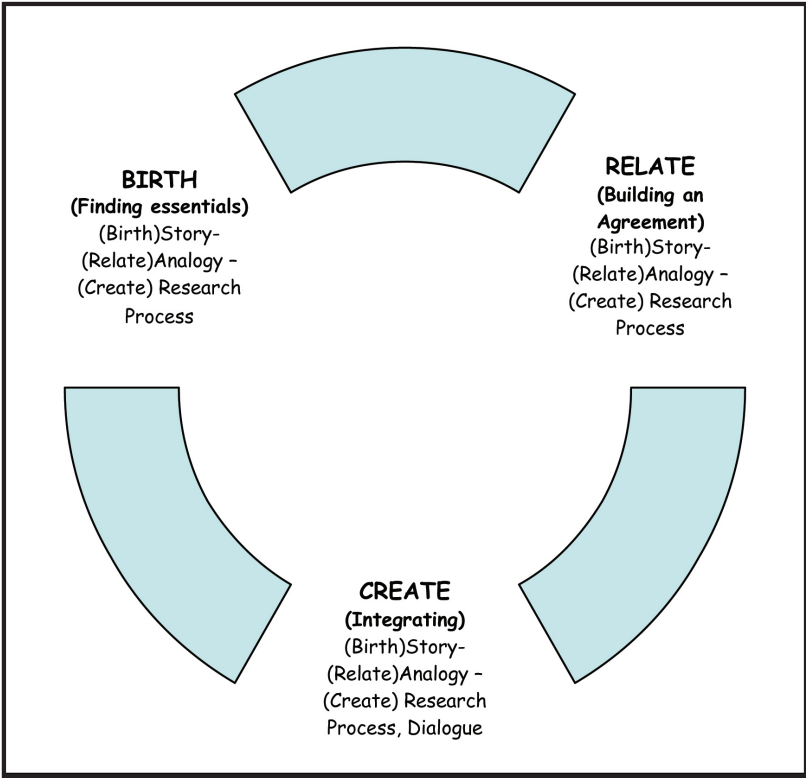


Table 3. Birth-relate- create cycle



In the Birth chapter we will travel the way in which we start the knowledge of ourselves and define what are our values and aspirations. The Relate chapter starts with the finding of Commonalities among those values and aspirations and the creation of a common aspiration that allow us to relate with each other and with the different instruments and people around us to achieve the new common aspiration. Then, the Create chapter is about how we integrate all these different aspirations and relations, and materialize them in the final creation, our process of research.

CHAPTER II: BIRTH

(Finding Essentials)

Moreliana

A piece of prose can turn rotten like a side of beef. For some years now I have been witness to the signs of rot in my writing. Just like me it has its angina, its jaundice, its appendicitis, but it is ahead of me on its way to final dissolution. After all, rotting means the end of the impurities in the component parts and the return of rights to chemically pure sodium, magnesium, carbon. My prose is rotting syntactically and is heading –with so much work- towards simplicity. I think that is why I no longer know how to write “coherent”; the bucking of a verbal bronco leaves me on foot after a few steps. Fixer les veritages, how good. But I get the feeling that I should establish elements. Poems are waiting for that, and certain kinds of novel or short story or theatre. The rest is the job of stuffing and it does not work out well for me.

Yes, but elements, are they the essential thing? Establishing carbon is not worth as much as establishing the Guermantes family.

I think in a vague sort of way that the elements I am aiming for are a result of composition. The schoolbook chemistry point of view has been turned inside out. When composition has reached its extreme limit, the territory of the elemental opens up. Establish them and if it is possible, be them.” Cortazar (1966)



Birth

I. A story about how this all started

I chose to study a Masters in Australia, mainly because I wanted to work with an Aboriginal community, to meet them and meet myself as I did when I lived with the Indigenous communities in Mexico.

The opportunities to do that were mostly as a volunteer, but the programs did not offer what I really wanted; I tried to find a job in the field, but I was not completely convinced about the positions offered and they probably were not convinced about me either. Then, I thought that the best possible way to achieve what I wanted was to get a grant, and start a research beneficial to an Aboriginal community and controlled by them.

Initially I thought that something related to bioprospection² was a good topic, as before coming to Australia I attended a seminar run by some Indigenous communities in Mexico struggling with that issue.

I talked to a friend and she introduced me to her friend, who later introduced me to Madonna from the Jagera Traditional Owners Assoc. Inc. We met for a coffee and I explained to her my intentions about doing research related to bioprospection and Indigenous people; She told me her views about these issues, but concerning their involvement she did not show any interest.

At that moment I remembered that my only desire was to work for them! Meet them and be useful for them! So I explained to her the work that I used to do in Mexico and asked her if she thought that I could be useful in someway.

She said –“Ah then you want to help us”- and she started talking about their intention of developing a handbook to incorporate cultural heritage values in local government planning.

² Bioprospection is an activity towards the classification of genetic resources in a defined area, Alejandro Argumedo from the Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Network defined bioprospection as “waking up in the night to find robbers in your home with a bag full of your possessions. When you ask them what’s going on, they reply, don’t worry, we have a proposal for benefit-sharing.” Taubman (2001)





Relate

“Those among the new creatures that found a niche in which they could at once sustain themselves and contribute to the life of the whole survived. Those that proved unable to find or create their niche of service expired. Continuously experimenting, interrelating, creating, building, the evolving web of life unfolded into a living tapestry of astonishing variety, beauty, awareness, and capacity for intelligent choice” (Korten 2001).

II. How does a relationship start?

Our metaphor starts here. We are going to travel through a process that takes a seed to a plant. What sort of way does it use to relate so that it can survive in many different environments?

To answer this question it will be necessary to travel not through the things of the seed we can see, but through the small invisible agents it has called genes, which contain the information that the seed requires to survive. They will show us how they make the seed relate in such a way that at the same time as the future plant defines its identity in each relationship it is also able to adapt to the environment and be beneficial for the environment as well.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to achieve that sort of mutually beneficial relationship. In that small world there exists also other kinds of agents that do not let this happen. I will not talk about all of them, I have chosen a significant one, the virus. It is slightly similar to the DNA contained in our friends the genes, but it has disastrous effects as the relationship it creates is harmful and might be deadly.

Why are we and will we be talking about this? Let this be a mystery and discover it at the end; Now, I can only tell you that we are observing relations and trying to learn from them.

2.1 A Healthy Relationship

Let's start our journey into the small world of a seed, inside it exists essential information, the Genes, "DNA sequences on chromosomes" (Emmeche & Hoffmeyer 1991).

In this small world the first relationship will start, so that this seed can become a plant. This relationship is so important that the DNA contained in the gene is just a series of data without any significance until it interacts.

"a given DNA sequence can change signifie (sic) depending on the state of the cell, when the interpretant changes, the signification of the gene does too... it is only by being used that the gene -as something other than just a molecular structure- is a sign." (Emmeche & Hoffmeyer 1991).

The relationship that starts is quite unique: The gene contains not only the information but also the code for its interpretation; this information is interpreted by the seed "as a manual for the construction of a tool for survival" (Hoffmeyer & Emmeche in Merrell, 1991). This tool will result in the creation of a plant that will be able to relate within its environment and become mature enough to reproduce itself with the help of all the elements around it.

From the existing message in the DNA, the seed will read its information and interpret it in a unique way. Depending on its environment, the seed will take what is necessary from that information and will define its identity by creating certain codes, organizing the information in a way that can be useful to its survival in the conditions around it.

These codes identify the system among its members and make possible communication, collaboration and the recognition of aliens to the system (Dwyer 1993 p.5).

The organism during its life obtains huge amounts of information that it may include into codes and apply towards the satisfaction of its system; but when it comes to its reproduction or internal relations to form new systems, although most of this information is incorporated in the structure of the DNA of the zygote,





it is incorporated as data, not as codes.³ The new zygote will create its own codes. If the information was not transmitted in this way the new organism would hardly survive as those old codes most probably would not be suitable for the conditions and environment in which it will live.

We need to notice that an organism can choose, which parts of its genome to use. Accordingly, the genome includes a functional and non functional part... The unused part consist (a) from non-coding DNA, which, still may include some pseudogenes, and (b) from coding DNA, which is not currently used, but can be used in some other circumstances (e.g., in other cells of the organism, other period of ontogenesis, or other environmental conditions). (Kull 2000 p.46)

This means that with the information given by the DNA and the elements and systems existing outside (other plants, predators, water, weather conditions, etc.), the organism constructs itself in order to be able to support the chain of life in the existing ecosystem (Hoffmeyer & Emmeche in Merrell, 1991). For example, if the seed has fallen in a rainforest which has a dry season, the plant will be of a smaller size compared to the one that has fallen over a rainforests where it rains all year.

This process of creation of codes and destruction of them when it comes to the moment for reproduction and establishment of new relations, makes possible the adaptation and survival of the organism. The key to survival is found here, in the way the organism prepares for a relationship, decoding and encoding.

³ Hoffmeyer & Emmeche (1991) explain this as the comparison between a Digital and an Analog system. We can explain this by knowing the difference between how a CD and a tape recorder work, The first one contains codified data, that can be read by a CD player which transforms those data in to music, in difference, the tape contains not data but music that is repeated by the tape recorder. But differently to the CD the information contained in the DNA can be read in many different ways, imagine it as a CD that contains millions of songs that depending on the CD player plays different songs.

2.2 An Infected Relationship

As we have seen the seed with the help of the gene constructs the plant with an ability to engage in harmony with its environment and make its life possible, but this changes when it is infected by, for example, a virus.

One definition I like for a virus is that of “selfish DNA” (Dawkins 1989), instead of relating like the DNA contained in the gene, by making its information completely available and building together with the zygote and organism, the virus, in a less cooperative way, imposes a message and uses the host to satisfy its needs without caring what happens to the host.

While the DNA contains *information*, from the latin *informare*, to bring something in to form, ‘form’ that will be defined by the relationship, the virus brings a structured message, an order that avoids any possible relation different from the replication of the virus (see Bohm 2003 p.291).

We can distinguish an infected cell from a healthy one in the way it interacts. While the healthy organism incorporates in the gene data and not codes, to allow the relation to give a structure to that data; the virus programs the information so that it duplicates in just one way without any intervention of the host in the creation of the message.

The difference between an infected cell and a healthy one is huge, while the journey of the infected cell is repetitive and without any evolution, the relationship of the healthy cell is a “revelation; it enables both, the organism and the world in which it interacts, to be lifted to a new level of existence” (Kaplan 2002 p.78). It is completely creative, brings to life a new system mutually beneficial to the participants.





2.3 But, why all these stories about viruses, genes and DNA?

That is knowledge includes not only information but misinformation; it also includes confused information and includes nonsense. It is mixed with all sort of useful and correct things. Even an idea which is correct in one context becomes nonsense in another. (Bohm 2003 p.265)

Well, the thing is that human beings, society or other human groups, all of us can act as both a virus or DNAS, depending on the way we interact with those around us and the environment.

The same as the plant in its process of creation, our society creates certain codes that identify us as part of a system, certain assumptions that have been useful for our survival by facilitating relations among the members of the group and the environment in which we interact.

Nevertheless, these codes can also have an adverse effect; they might complicate the relationship with people that do not belong to the group, they might impede the formation of new systems and the possibility of survival in a different environment; in other words, they stop creativity. Let us present an example:

-Once a friend attended a convention of the International Bar Association held in a beach in Mexico; the temperature was around 40°C and there were lawyers dressed in a suit and tie. After the fourth day almost all of them were dressing in a cool and less formal way.-

The development of a dress code in the Law profession, has allowed the lawyers certain status in the society, it also reminds them of the responsibility when they exercise the profession. But after a week at 40°C degrees, the dress code becomes insignificant compared to the need for survival and then there comes the time to unlearn the dress code and start a new more suitable one.



As mentioned before, unless our cells are infected by a virus our cells relate and reproduce in a creative way. But we culturally and socially can relate and reproduce our thoughts and behaviours either as a virus, or as friendly cells.

As viruses, we infiltrate our behaviours and conceptions in others' culture and force them to reproduce these behaviours even at the risk of destroying themselves; or as friendly cells, we bring no assumptions and present our identity and information available to start the creation of something that can be mutually beneficial for those involved.

As we have observed in this chapter, the difference between a healthy cell and an infected one relies mostly in the way they transfer information. In order to interact as friendly organisms we have to do the same as the cell does with the gene: to unlearn many codes and bring them to their essential simplicity, so that something new can be created⁴.

But unlearning does not mean erasing, it means decomposing, everything remains in our memory but in its purest way, so that they can become elements of a new creation.

2.4 But how can we find those essential elements?

*Unlearning is about seeing how the organism movements,
form and content have been influenced by –and even
trapped within- invisible archetypal fields, so that the
organism can begin to act in freedom once more.
(Korten 2002 p.78)*

When we are born our identity is defined, that is why all our cells have a footprint (Dwyer 1993 p.5), something that makes them unique; the footprint is used by our immune system to recognize the cells and not attack them.

The same with our mind, we are made of some essential particularities, a certain identity that passes to all our creations. We are naturally able to recognize

⁴ See Kaplan 2002 p78-79, Bohm 2003 p.396, Krishnamurti 1978.



it, but in order to do that we have to observe, to stop and listen. While listening, we will see the structures, the assumptions, and we will be able to decompose them to bring them to the essentials.

As we have said, those essentials belong to us, they define our identity and at the same time allow us to create a huge variety of things. They want to be in all the things we do and we need them to be there because they define our identity. Without them our actions are empty.

But we rarely stop to check if they are there. We rarely ask ourselves; why am I doing this? The answer to this question tells us if the action is essential, if it really belongs to us, and if it is related, to the sorts of things that we consider absolutely significant for our existence.

The question 'why' is a useful tool to find these essentials⁵. But just before going further let me make this clear: the essentials can change; they are constantly being shaped by our discovery of the world. When we come to an static point when we think that we know everything, the learning stops, we die, we become a virus.

The essentials present a definition of our intentions and our identity. They allow us to start a relationship. In the story that appears at the beginning of this part, I presented to Madonna an assumption, the idea that research on bioprospection was needed. That assumption stopped the relationship from going further; I was acting as a virus trying to impose an idea for the satisfaction of my needs.

When my attitude changed and the assumption disappeared, when I asked myself why bioprospection? It started a series of questions until one that answered all the others came, 'because I want to work with them'. When I presented that element I made myself available with the information I had, not pre-set codes, no more assumptions other than the one of working with them; that opened the door for the development of a common idea created after that first interaction.

5 "The first question –why- provides a general orientation to the focus of the investigation... The intent is not to define causes, but to understand how the problem is encompassed in the context of setting." Stringer (1996 p.75)

Create

III. The First Stage of Our Research

As it has been presented the establishment of a healthy relationship is not an easy task. It needs an awareness of those things we have encoded and can make us act as a virus, and it needs as well to find what are those essential elements from which we will construct something new.

Then the first stage in our research process needs to be about finding those essential elements so that the relation can be a healthy one.

3.1 The Researcher

The first question is for the researcher; 'Why am I doing this?', does it have a heart for me? 'What are my values and principles and how am I practicing them here? We as researchers are the ones who will initiate relating; therefore, we have to be clear about our intentions. The sort of values and motives involved in the establishment of a relationship are crucial to understand the real cause of the relationship; as Habermas (1976 p.95) states "The values and norms in accordance with which motives are formed have an immanent relation to truth".

-Responding to these questions was a great experience for me. It allowed me within my heart to find why I wanted to be involved in the creation of the handbook. I found that it was related to my universe, to a responsibility linked to my origins that set two worlds inside me and makes me see myself as an instrument to bridge these worlds.





The finding of the essentials by the researcher may not be necessary as information that will be presented to the stakeholders, but they are important to determine our involvement as researchers and the performance of our job.

-Knowing why I am involved in it makes me feel good, it helps me do my job with happiness and put my heart in it. It allows me to establish a personal relationship with my work and the people involved in it.

3.2 The Stakeholders

3.2.1 Who shall we talk to?

Once we as researchers are clear about our intentions and values, we can start our first relationship with the stakeholders in which we will encourage each of them to start the journey of self discovery of identity and intentions. In order to begin, we have to know who are the ones who can lead this journey in the organisation and who in it has the responsibility for the areas related to the research.

We have to look for the faces that can provide information about the story of the organisation and its intentions and values, literature about any of the participants is useless if it has not been recommended or given by them. What we want is a process of self-knowledge that eliminates any non-essential assumptions, in the discovery not only of who one is but who one is becoming⁶.

At the beginning I was not sure about who were going to be the ones that would provide the information. I only knew one person from the traditional owners and I was not sure if she was the right person to talk to, but she was the only one, so I asked about who I should talk to and she advised about a meeting in which the elders would appoint the spokes persons, she was one of those appointed. The same with

⁶ Kelly (et alt. 1988 p.52) explains that the self is something changing, we are becoming ourselves

the City Council. We talked with the ones we knew and waited for a meeting where we were told who we should talk to. Along the research process has appeared new people to talk to. Knowledge is spread all over the organisations and one person does not know everything.

3.2.2 The story of the Organisation

The next step is the journey into the story of the organisation and the persons in it. This journey starts with a question that has to be chosen carefully because it will define the journey. It is like a ticket to enter a trip, we can buy a ticket for a short visit to certain places, or we can buy one that will give us a long expedition to discover how they got where they are. If this ticket was a tour to the top of the mountain, the first one will take us in a helicopter and set us on the top of it in ten minutes, the other will be a one day trip walking the path taken by the first person to get to the top of the mountain.

The other sort of journey is the journey of discovery. Here we are not sure where we will end up; we may have some idea of where we would like to go, but typically it is ill defined. We do not have detailed maps, and we cannot predict what is likely to happen. Indeed we expect the unexpected, and when the unexpected happens welcome it as a new opportunity. It is the journey itself that is important, rather than the arrival. (Ife 2002 p.119)

The journey that will suit us best is the second one, the journey of discovery. Yes, it might be tiring, might be longer, but it will give us the experience of all that was necessary to reach that top; why the people in the organisation chose that path and no other, what they saw there that was significant, and then we will find what is essential, what cannot be changed or negotiated. So our first question is a broad one, 'tell me about the organisation, tell me about your unit, tell me about your work, and then what is important for you in this





research?⁷ Take me on the journey of how and why the organisation was made or the unit works in a particular way, tell me then why this is significant for you and how does it relate to your journey.'

As researchers we have to be aware that this is a personal journey and we are there only to facilitate it, so our interventions will only be towards asking for clarification or asking for more information about things that seem important for them according to his/her reactions throughout the story. The notes taken have to be recorded in the same words used by the participant, because "within the word we find two dimensions, reflection and action in such radical interaction that if one is sacrificed-even in part the other immediately suffers." Freire (1974 p.75)

-We arranged a meeting at the University. They were the ones elected by the committee of the organisation to speak about the organisation and cultural heritage. We sat under a tree and I asked them to tell me the story about the organisation. They talked about their work for almost two and a half hours, full of passion; While they were remembering the story, the family meeting, their native title application, the starting of the organisation with limited resources, how they were gaining respect with their job; they seemed to be getting more energy. I was excited too; my understanding of the importance of this agreement for them enhanced. I tried to note down every word in my notebook. At the same time my heart was living that moment. I was with them in their journey.

By this time the experience has taken the participant to the discovery of his/her essentials that he/she is using to recreate the story.

It is possible that the participant instead of telling the story starts repeating a certain code or speech. If we notice that, we need to guide the participant into the environment of the personal, what do you think about that? Why do you think that happened? So that he/she can decompose those constructions and present another one choosing essential elements existing in the codes he/she was repeating before.

⁷ This is one of the frameworks for description presented by Stringer (1996 p. 62, 75)

-The interviews with the members of the City Council were different. They started in some kind of official way, but we were moving towards the personal concerns. The responses, from being some what official similar to the e-mails they sent me a week before, became more personal. They were now on a human scale.

We now have a story, we just need to ensure that the story we have in our notebook is the story they wanted to tell, so we ask: Can I read you back my notes so that you can tell me if I wrote what you wanted and if there is any part you want to erase or something you want to add? If you have a bad writing as I do that you can not even understand yourself, then you will probably need to send them the notes when you have transcribed them.

3.3 Finding Essential

And now we have a story that contains the most important things for those involved, but we need to find the essentials, that is not a simple task. We need to break the information into those elements. And how do we do that? There must be many ways, here I will present two.

The first one and the best, I think, is to let the stakeholders determine these essentials by themselves, so we ask, please tell me what is the most important points in what you have said (Stringer 1996 p.62).

Unfortunately it is not always possible. Some times, as in this case we ran out of time, and it was difficult for the stakeholders to meet again, so we had to find these essentials by ourselves. How? You may ask. I will say that it is not an easy task and we run the risk of avoiding essentials or presenting something that is essential for us but not for the stakeholders; but it is possible to find a way to achieve the goal while being aware of the risk.

What we did to find these essentials was to look for heurisms (Kelly et al. unpublished) and epiphanies (Stringer 1996), those words and parts of the story that engendered emotions while they were narrated, the importance highlighted through the story and its constant reference and meaning in the overall story, could be considered essential.





We now have phrases, but they are in a soup, like a soup of letters that my mother used to prepare. Now we have to form words with that soup. This chaos of phrases full of meaning has to be ordered in certain ways that make them comprehensible, so that we can recognise the essential units.

To make these units we can build a kind of concept map⁸ that categorises the phrases we found. We do this by finding relations among those phrases; we put together those that contain similar essential words or similar essential meaning.

The categories together show the meaning of the story they were taken from, but at the same time they become the essential elements we were looking for.

Then, we presented them to the interviewees to validate them and ask for any changes or additions. An example of such categorisation is presented below.

⁸ This is recommended in the Think stage of Action Research to help participants to find solutions to complex situations that need a holistic perspective. (Stringer 1996 p.91)

Table 4. Categorisation

1. Through the organisation is how we have learnt and the organisation can provide what has been learnt
- If we were doing things on our own there was no protection
 - We started promoting the organisation as an information centre.
 - Our people have to be educated on how we have developed the Org. and be realistic of what we can achieve and what is a priority. We employ our own country workers.
 - If you get native title you need an organisation running, and to know how to manage it.
 - Through the organisation is how we learn and the organisation can provide what has been learnt
 - Now we have got a good base to maintain our cultural heritage
 - The Org. has open doors, “the owners are now involved”, that give us recognition. The organisation gave us access to representatives in state governments

Now that we have followed this process with the stakeholders and we have essential elements that define who they are and what their aspirations are; the conditions for a relation are set. We have constructed our ‘genes’ our structures that contain essential information the next is the work of the relation, and that is what we are going to talk about in the next chapter.



CHAPTER III: RELATE

(Building an agreement)

“Fundamental to each person’s presence is each person’s difference. In fact presence is not possible without difference, since even on a very simplistic level difference is essential to life. For example, none of us would be here if the male and female difference did not exist. Meaning depends on difference as well, since if we were all the same there would be nothing to share or contribute to one another.” (Snow 1990 in Rahnema, 1997)



Birth

1. A Story about how this all really started

At that moment I noticed Madonna's attitude changed entirely, although she was very kind all the time, I noticed that she did not trust me completely, like she was thinking, what does this mob want from us? But when she realized that what I really wanted was to work with them and be useful to them doing the things I like most, I felt she began to trust me, then the conversation really started, it became a dialogue.

I listened carefully; she explained how they were having trouble with the government's approach to consultation –*they consult with who ever appears even if that person does not have any responsibility about that area or does not belong to this country. We have to tell them who to consult with, and how, we have to tell them how we work; that is why we need to make this handbook.*

I was really excited, the project was appearing as a combination of two things I liked to do most, Law and community development. They needed someone to do the research to develop the handbook and I wanted an opportunity to work with them, and practice what I have learnt and to learn from them. We agreed to work together in the development of the handbook, we only needed to find how we could do that.





Relate

*“At every turn, in every mode and at every opportunity
plants seek to live their lives, and in their seeking,
support all other life, including humans”.*

Cajete (2000 p.128)

II. Relating

2.1 How do plants relate?

In the last chapter we looked at how a plant organizes the information in its seed so that the seed can read the information according to the new environment and adapt to it without losing its identity. Here we will travel through the process on how it will start to relate so that this seed can give birth to another plant. Hopefully by observing this we would be able to see the path to take when we want to build relationships the way the plants do.

Preparing this section I went through a book and a video called *The Private Life of Plants* (Attenborough, 1995). The video starts on how the plants travel, how they move from one place to another either by growing, by sticking in other trees or by setting the seeds in such a way that they can be carried by the wind, like the dandelion; by the water, like the palm; or through other animals, like fruit-trees do. It is amazing how, by relating with others, the plant is able to travel large distances.

2.1.1 What conditions allow them to relate in harmony?

This collaboration that occurs between the plant and other beings including humans to spread the seeds around the earth does not happen at all times, it will happen at the right moment, when the environment is appropriate for

constructing a reciprocal relationship; that is, until most of the things that compose the environment, like seasons, meteorological factors, other existing plants and predators, are considered favourable for the relationship.

The plant therefore, in order to ensure balanced-relationships uses a diverse range of resources in its inner and outer environment. For example it will wait for appropriate conditions of weather, flowers will grow in spring when there is plenty of nutrients in the soil that provide the energy needed, the plant will provide their seeds with a bitter taste or will make them poisonous so that they reach their final destination (Attenborough, 1995).

All these resources developed by the plant play an important role in building barriers which are set to ensure reciprocity and equilibrium, “boundaries are an essential feature of life” (Korten, 2000 p.123). Without caring for the conditions in the environment or without making boundaries, plants would never survive as they probably will end in detrimental relationships.

Then, once the plant finds favourable conditions and is strong enough to support a relationship, it will set itself the possibility of starting one. A relationship is something the plant cares for, it is not achieved with whoever appears nor at all times.


2.1.3 How does the plant meet its mate?

Now that the plant feels like engaging, it will pick up what it engages with. Relationships are not an abstract thing, they are a personal shift, a matching, a process of identification:

An identification Process can be defined as a process whereby another beings interests are instinctively responded to as thought they were ones own interests. Naes in (Hoffmeyer, 1996 p.132)

It is a personal encounter where there are no hidden interest, where a process of trust is developed, where there is a natural desire to collaborate. How does this happens?





There are two main elements that plants look for: something in common and something missing in the other that can be provided by the relationship. By relating with others the plant identifies itself in the other and finds a meaning to its existence.

Plants as all living beings react in a way that is meaningful to their own needs. The plant sees the world from its own perspective regarding its identity; a grass, a cactus and a lemon, sees the world in different ways⁹.

“When I was older, she taught me how each plant needed certain things to encourage its growth. She told me how some plants like to grow in a family while others prefer to grow alone-just like people. And, just like people, she said each plant had its own personality.” (Cajete, 2000 p.128)

All those things that form the internal environment of each plant (its own personality), have a meaningful structural correspondence with other different beings in what could be called a general plan of nature (Krampem, 1998 p.419, Kawade p.381 1999).

The shape and identity of each thing is not mere coincidence they are all made to be matched, they are all made to make life possible. There is indeed in all things a final causation (Braga, 1997).

This possibility of matching and the identification in this final causation is what makes plants engage. By communicating with the outer beings and the environment they will recognize the existing correspondence in which they can fit.

The method is to find the counterpart to each note of the composition, following the motto: Wherever there is a point, its corresponding counterpart can be found. The physical behaviour of raindrops is the counterpoint corresponding to the point of the leaf's form, the soft skin of the mammals correspond to the tick's bite, the path corresponds to man's feet, nourishment to his mouth. (Uexkull in Krampem, 1998 p.420)

⁹ An important literature about this statement can be found in 134 Semiotica (2001)

The plant will then recognise the bird's claims for food and that the plant is able to provide the food the bird is looking for. The plant will also identify itself in the bird's disposition to travel and so the bird will help in the plant's journey to spread its seeds. All is ready then, having set that agreement they will find together the way their intentions can be fulfilled, but that is another story.

2.2 Human Relations


*"In trees and plants one may trace the vestiges of Amity and love...
The vine embraces the elm, and other plants cling to the vine.
So that things that have no powers of sense to perceive
anything else, seem strongly to feel the advantages of union."
Desiderius Erasmus (Suzuki, 1997 p.160)*

Humans are not altogether different from plants when it comes to relationships. We also have a profound need for empathy, "it is through empathy that we become humans" (Hoffmeyer, 1996 p. 133) and this means it is through relationships we can find a meaning for our existence and give meaning to others' existence.

To engage in meaningful relationships, as in the case of plants we need to be prepared for it and find favourable conditions in the environment, in this case the social environment, conditions that allow us to achieve meaning and correspondence in the relationship. Many questions arise, have I developed a mechanism of defence that stops abuses by the other part? Are the intentions of my possible partners clear so that I can open myself to the dialogue? Or if starting the relationship is there a possibility of sustainability?

When talking about the factors to be considered, anything that can give us a better understanding of the context is useful. The idea is to find out the positions of power of those about to engage in the relationship, and the factors that can balance that relationship, if they exist in the environment or how they can be created.





“Hutchinson and Foley (1994, p.6) talk of the importance of the relative distribution of power within a partnership: “Different stakeholders may have different priorities, and the identification not only of who the stakeholders are, but their relative power and importance within the partnership can be crucial”. Smith & Beazley (2000)

Once we have ensured the conditions are favourable we can start looking at the possible partners and the possibilities of engaging in a reciprocal relationship. This possibility will appear if there exist similarities in intentions and differences in capacities that make each other needed for collaboration to achieve those similar intentions.

Coincidence shall be found in motives, they have a direct effect in the relationship as they justify it for both parties. Motives are what make the relationship something meaningful. When motives are coincident, they take to the establishment of what Habermas (1976 p.11) calls norms of rational-consensus that sustain the relationship.

In other words, both parties agree that the relationship is needed to join efforts for the achievement of a common goal, it is that coincidence of motives that makes the parties get together. For example, a couple of months ago a friend of mine invited me to his parent’s farm in Nimbim. He showed me a nice spot where he has removed the weeds and he is growing native plants, building a beautiful environment for his farm. He told me that the government pays him to do it. He is certainly concerned about environmental conservation and it seems that the government is too; so the relationship is meaningful for both parties, it allows him to care for the environment, something that he enjoys, and gives to the government a meaning for its existence as well.

But coincidence in motives is not enough. Apart from willingness, there must be a reciprocal need that strengthens the relationship. The relationship then is also supported by norms of compromise, norms adjustment between particular interests that take place under conditions of balance of power between the parties

involved (Habermas 1976 p.11). The existing conditions and the nature of the parties' claim for collaboration are essential to achieve mutual goals.

In the example of my friend's farm; interlinked to his good intentions of caring for the environment there is a need for an income to generate resources for his survival, his good will is not enough. To remove the weed he needs to invest several hours of his time which he could use to generate an income. On the other hand the government needs to accomplish with his responsibility of caring for the environment and needs to pay people to do that. Each party finds its counterpart and the relationship then is also binding by a corresponding need.

The possibility of finding coincidence in intentions and possibilities or balance relations depends on how open the relationship is and how much the parties have let themselves be known. Relationships are more than coincidence of motives and correspondence in needs; they are about having an opportunity to share life and make it meaningful for one another. This goes beyond institutions, this is something only living things can achieve. Building endurable relationships is important as one of the participants in the research process when asked about what she has learned from Indigenous people said: "I think this is the greatest lesson. The lesson about relationships and responsibility".

In the story at the beginning of this chapter, it was only when I opened myself with the intention of just meeting them and working with them, did Madonna have an opportunity to truly meet me. Consequently, that empathy let us see our coincidence in motives in working together in something beneficial for Aboriginal people. She talked about their intentions and the possibility appeared for a relationship. The motives were coincident and I had something they needed and they something I needed. So the agreement of working together in the creation of the handbook was set. Something meaningful for both of us was created.





Create

"The way an aesthetic order is constructed is similar to a composition of a work of art, where the greatness of the artist is in creating a piece which is actually both aesthetic and rational, as it is based upon an appreciation of the uniformities (the compositional elements) as well as the diversities (the irreplaceably unique characteristics) that constitute the work" (Rahnema, 1997 p.400).

III. The second Stage of our Research

As has been explained, in order to achieve balanced relationships it is necessary to find out if the environment is suitable for these kinds of relationships. Once we have found this, it is just about having an opportunity to communicate with each other and see if there is a possibility of establishing a relationship. If this is the case, then it is possible to establish an agreement and set the elements of it.

The analysis of the environment is constantly done at all stages in the process. In this case, it began even before the project started, at the time of applying for funding.

I remember the day we first met and we agreed about doing the handbook, - The conditions are there, we can do it in partnership. Some people in the government have a genuine interest in working with us, Madonna said. She also mentioned their organisation was already doing some of this work.

In fact as my understanding grew about the situation I realized that the conditions were suitable as in this case two main factors were there. There was a genuine interest from the state and as Brant (in Park, 1993 p.150) states:

The products of participatory research –self-reliant, consciousness, Indigenous knowledge and practical plans- will be most viable where the state authority has a commitment to devolving responsibility to community institutions.

As can be observed in the introduction to this work where part of the analysis is presented, the policy and the legal environment supported the participation of Indigenous people in the identification, management and assessment of Aboriginal cultural heritage. This encouraged the government to work with Aboriginal people. Also, the upcoming Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act specified those rights and enforced the involvement of Aboriginal people.

On the other hand an organisation specialized in cultural heritage existed and was strong enough to support a partnership. This is considered essential in cases when certain expertise is required (Brant in Park, 1993 p.490)

As the interviews proceeded, it became clearly that the conditions were favourable and that it was possible to strengthen the existing relationship between the Jagera and the Brisbane City Council. Coincidence in motives and points for collaboration appeared.

I remember that in the first meeting with the stakeholders, government and Aboriginal people, to appoint the steering committee, someone approached me during the lunch and asked me: do you really think this can be possible? I smiled and explained to him how many similarities I found. Along the track while the interviews were evolving at some point there always appeared an interest or something to value about the other party.

With the favourable environment the categories developed from the interviews were presented at a meeting with the stakeholders, every one discussed them. For the Government, the intentions of the Jagera became clear and they agreed on them. They also recognized there were missing some areas that should have an input in developing common objectives and outcomes.



The creative part is in identifying points in common and points of complement and the spark of friendship that gives birth to a relationship.

This is an example of what was done in this identification:

Table 5. Identification of communalities

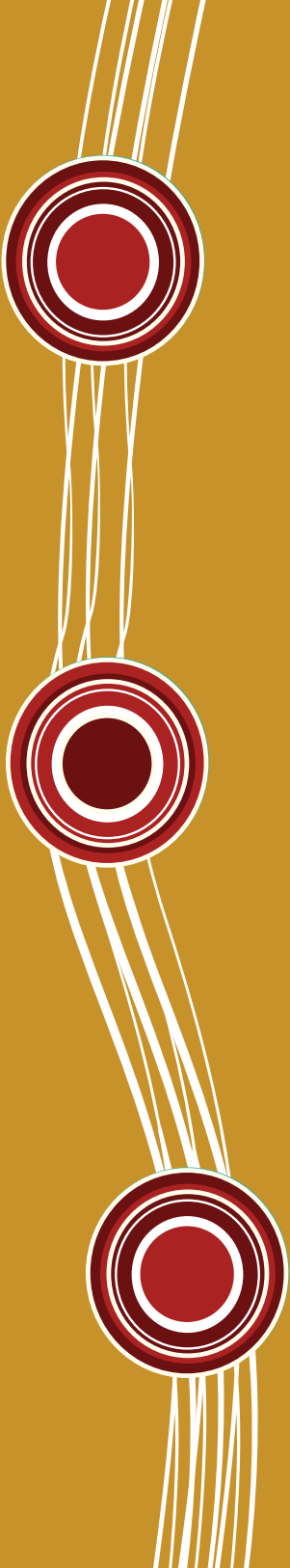
BCC	Jagera
Council has an interest in engaging in cultural heritage and to ensure that cultural significance is not lost.	If the practice of these values are not allowed you displace and impact on a society
Who do we need to speak to and how would be the best way to speak with the group?	The Jagera Assoc. is the structure by which we interact and address those values
To work at a strategic level with Indigenous people	How do we make it? One of the ways is fostering a policy to work directly with the Jagera, to be part and have control of cultural heritage, to create an opportunity for future generations.

Later on, the objectives and outcomes can be defined by analysing the existing information. To do that I found a useful framework described by Stringer (1996 p.99) consisting in organizing the information by solving these simple questions ‘Why’, for goals and ‘What’ for objectives.

Later on the objectives and outcomes can be defined and approved by those involved. The base of the agreement has been constructed, its genes are defined and all what is next is about the evolution and adaptation of this new creation.

Table 6. Objectives and outcomes

OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES OF THE HANDBOOK FOR INCLUSION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING JAGERA –BCC	
I. Objectives:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To achieve sustainable development by protecting cultural heritage values.• To facilitate the development of a partnership between the Jagera and the BCC for ecologically sustainable planning and management of cultural heritage.• To educate about the importance of cultural heritage for the Jagera.• To foster a policy to work directly with the Jagera in the planning and management of their cultural heritage.• To ensure that cultural heritage significance is not lost• To incorporate the principles proposed in the new Cultural Heritage Bill
II. Expected Outcomes:	
To have an instrument that:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies what cultural heritage is for the Jagera.• Presents the relevant legislation related to cultural heritage• Identifies triggers and potential triggers• Designs a process that allow the participation of the Jagera in the different stages of planning and project management when it involves cultural heritage• Creates and agreed process towards a cultural heritage register or map• Identifies ways of access to information about cultural heritage values• Defines procedures of action when cultural heritage items are found or places reached.• Identifies ways of involvement for the Jagera in the conservation and management of cultural heritage places



CHAPTER IV: CREATE

(Integrating)

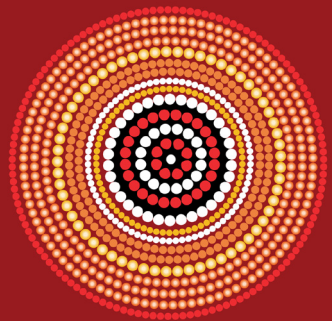
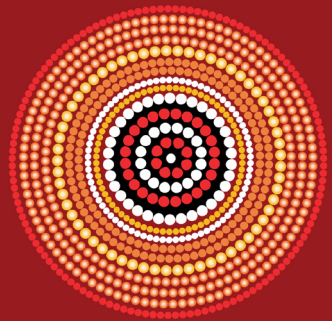
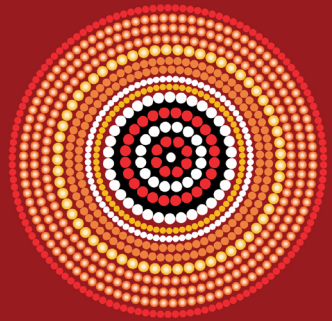
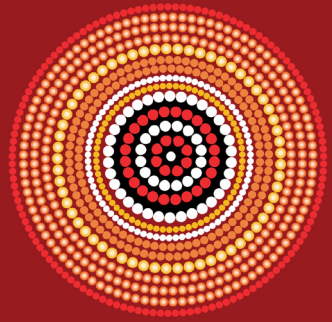
“Were our eyes not like the sun,
Never could they see it

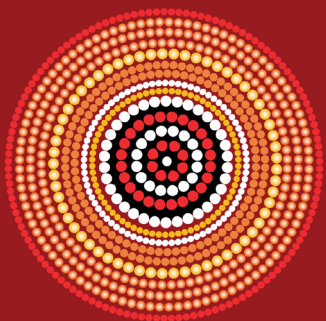
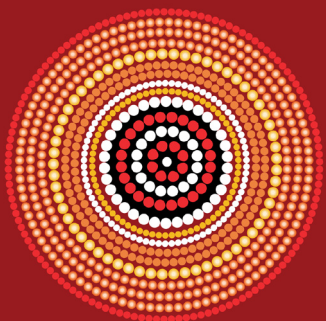
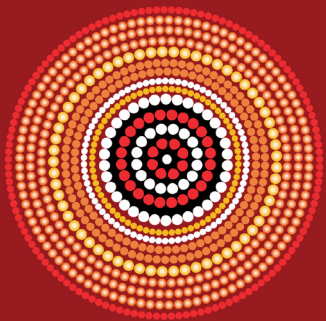
Were the sun not like our eye
It could not shine in any sky

Were our lungs not like the plant
Never could they breath the air

Were the plant not like our lung,
No Breath would wave in any place”

(Uexkull paraphrasing Goethe
in Krampem, 1998 p.421)





Birth

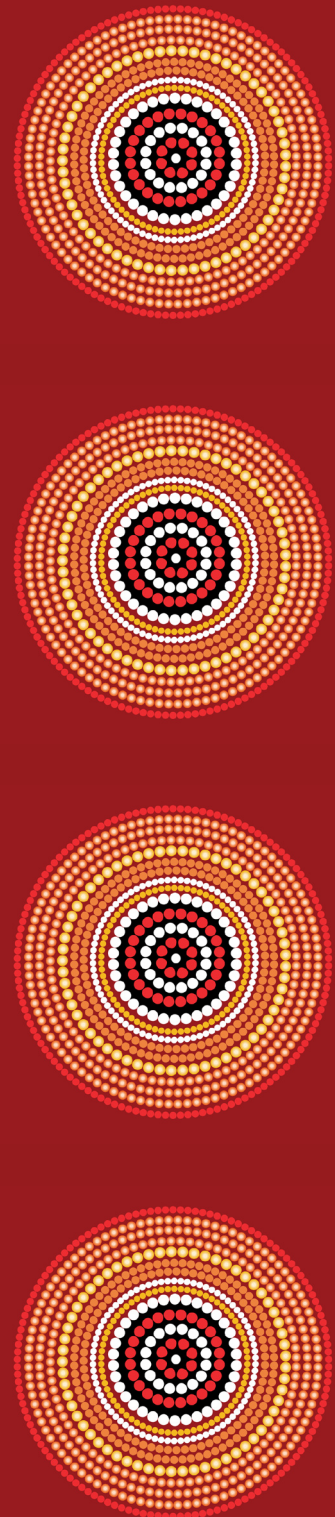
1. A Story about how this all evolved.

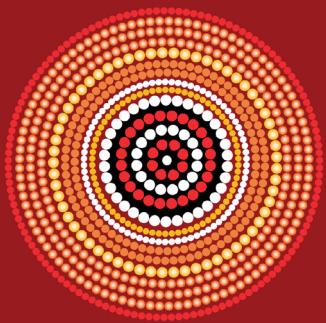
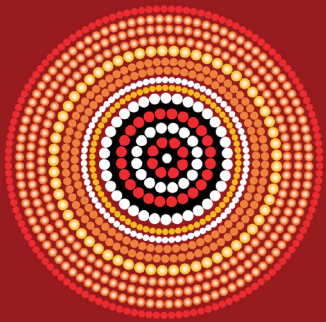
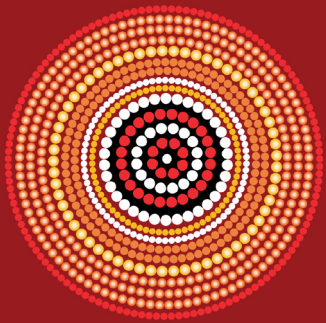
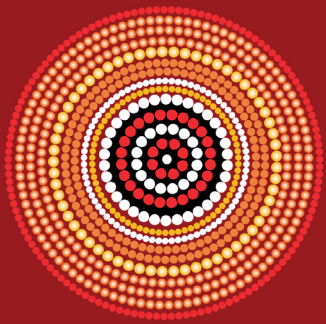
The conversation continued and we started talking about how we were going to make the handbook. My mouth, that sometimes does not know how to stop, started advising about the research technique we could use, I explained to Madonna about Action Research and how it was possible to involve different stake holders and the community. The second time we met, I even presented a book to her about cross-cultural approaches to decision making for Aboriginal communities in rural Australia. I think that she might have thought; 'This guy does not understand anything, what is he talking about? But she just told me -we will have to design our own process, this is different. And indeed it is.

We agreed to work together and we started talking about funding bodies, AIATSIS was the first to appear but the deadlines for application were nearing. We commented that it was not the best funding body as the results of the research would be owned by AIATSIS. She warned me about it and the need of having to find a way to protect the knowledge that belonged to the Jagera, but that was the only thing we had at the time and we decided to apply for it.

We went through the application trying to fit the research in to the priorities highlighted by AIATSIS. Some academics at the university helped me to meet the criteria and served as referees for the application. They kindly gave their time to go through the application and made some corrections.

The application was submitted but we kept looking for other funding bodies until one day, when I was reading a newspaper, I stumbled upon an advertisement about Community Development Assistance Grants of the Brisbane City Council. I went to the information session and talked with the officers there about the project. They looked very interested and asked me to ring their boss to talk about it further.





I commented to Madonna about the grant and she thought it was great. She knew people from the Council and as the project was based upon a need they had as well they would surely support it. We met them and together discussed how to address both their needs and fill in the application. They entirely supported the idea and had an input in the application. Obtaining the funding was going to be significant for both parties.

When I compare this application with the one presented to AIATSIS, there is a huge difference. In the later one everyone was interested, they were not just doing it because they wanted to help, but because it was something meaningful for them as well. The feeling given by the work done together was something that we already had gained.

I think that there is no need to say which of the applications was successful, and how much all of us celebrated what we achieved.

Relate

*Learning to converse well with the world
can begin by listening carefully to the messages
sent ceaselessly by our bodies and by the other
forms of life that share this planet. The best
conversations are still those that play variations
on that great ancient theme, I'm here; Where are you?
Meeker (Cajete 2000 p.197)*

II. Creation.

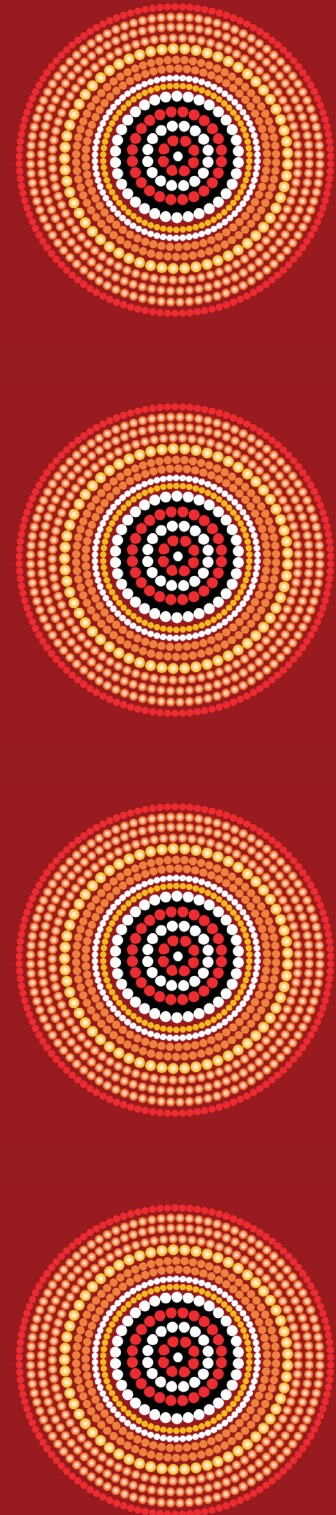
2.1 How do plants create themselves?

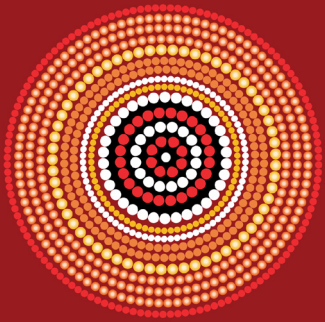
Let us follow the process on how a seed manages to develop itself into a plant. We will go through the steps it takes to incorporate itself into the environment, finding its niche and bringing life to those around it. This might help us to understand the path that can be taken in the integration of an instrument into a community.

2.1.1. Starting a conversation.

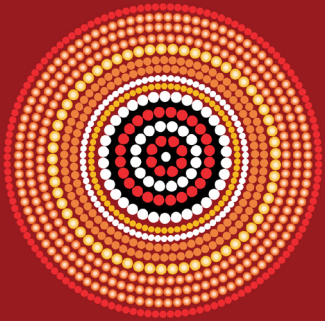
Let us go back to the story of the bird and the plant. Remember that the plant perceives the bird's need for food and other animals as well and realizes of the possibility that those animals collaborate in spreading its seeds, "plants too have animals to disperse their offspring" (Margulis, 2000 p.209).

The seed of that plant which was probably brought to the place by another bird it is now growing. It has essential information in its genes, a story which we already went through in the first chapter and with that information it will be able to develop itself into a plant. This will be done based on the results of a previous communication established with the different members that compose its environment, in which it is understood how correspondence could be achieved and collaboration could be possible. It talked and waited for feedback and with that feedback it developed itself.





Each feedback-based communication model between the subject and its environment can be examined as a mechanism allowing the development of correspondence between the subject and its environment (Maran, 2003 p.71).

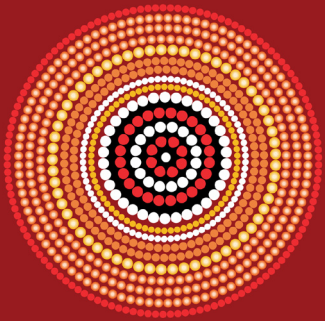


The form of the plant, as Goethe affirmed, is the result of a “conversation between the entelechy and the environment” (Bortoft, 1996 p.271). The plant forms itself according to itself, this is what Goethe called ‘entelechy’ (Bortof, 1996 p.269), but takes its shape as a result of that conversation.

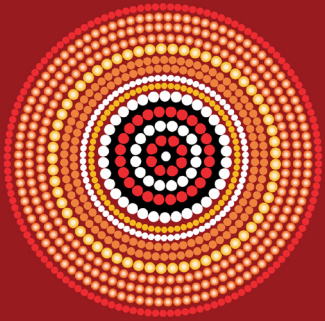
2.1.2 How can this conversation become more effective?

The freer and more varied this conversation can be, the better the plant can develop itself in a way suitable to achieve meaningful relationships with all the members of its environment and ensure life for all.

The plant, in order to create new suitable relations for its changing environment, has to avoid any artificial relation that could break the natural equilibrium by eliminating previous conceptions in the information given to the seed. In order to survive and adjust to the new environment the seed has to return to the wilderness to avoid any previous relationship that could make it dependent. The story of the American apple found in Pollan (2001) is a good example:



The apple, like the settlers themselves, had to forsake its former domestic life and return to the wild before it could be reborn as an American. By reverting to wild ways, the apple was able to reach down in to its vast sort of genes accumulated over the course of its travels through Asia and Europe and discover the precise combination of traits to survive in the New World. The apple probably found some of what it needed to survive by hibradizing with the wild American crabs.



John Chapman or John Appleseed, as he was called, who was one of the fathers of the American varieties of apple, used to set his nurseries near the river in places not yet developed so that the plant that would grow there was adapted to the place and would be able to survive (Pollan, p.4 2001). The brilliant work

of this man was done in harmonic relation with nature, helping without taking control of the natural development of the plant.

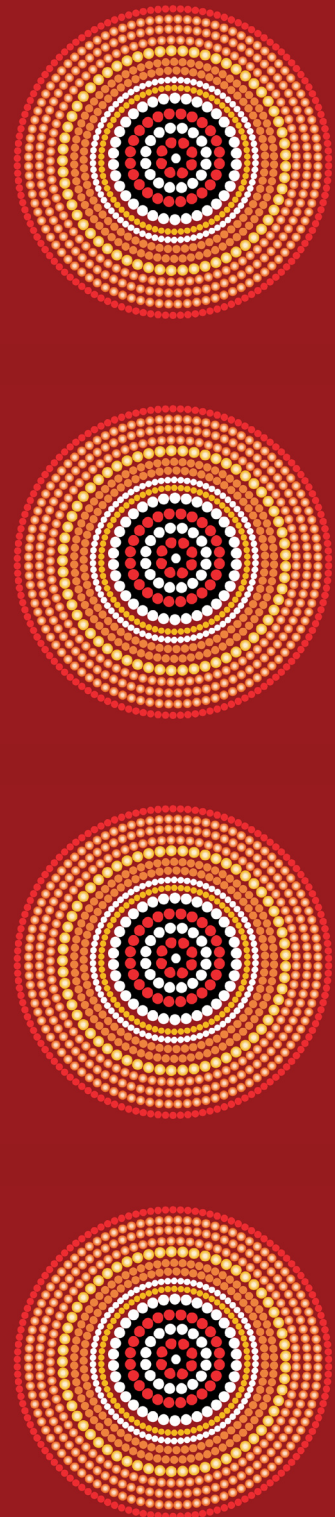
Therefore, as we have observed, to be able to develop itself in a way that could be beneficial to its environment the seed needs to have the opportunity to engage in a deep and varied conversation with all the members of its environment.

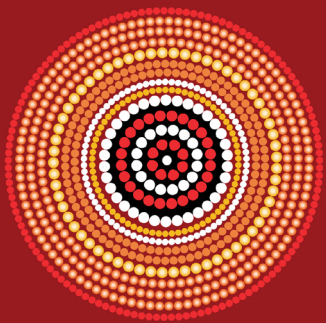
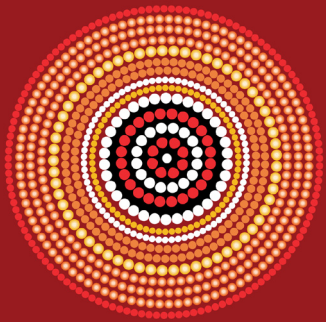
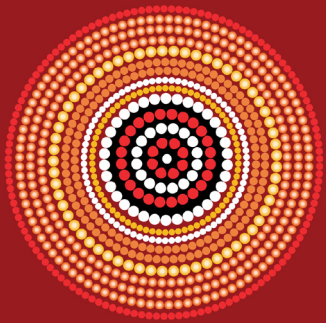
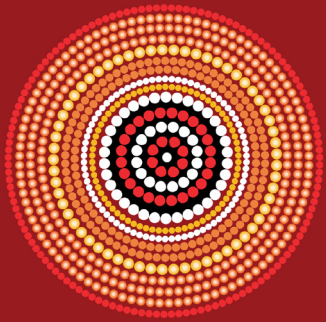
2.1.3. What follows the conversation?

From that conversation the plant starts to create itself so that it is capable of establishing a meaningful relationship with all those who it previously conversed with. It will look for meaningful nondependent relationships, having in mind the relationship with each one is not an end in itself and that each part is a member of a system bigger than them. "The whole plant species, not a single plant, is the unity; it is responsible for the life of the individual plant" (Grohmann in Bortoft, 1996 p.259). The system belongs to a bigger one made of alliances, indeed "life is a network of cross-kingdom alliances" (Margulis, 2000 p.215). The plant will know that not only for itself or its partners does the plant engage in a relationship, but also for maintaining a system from which life depends.

Unfortunately this is hardly understood nowadays. People like Chapman are less common, human-beings have taken over the work of nature and try to monopolize the relationship with plants. Sexual reproduction is less common and the seeds are less prepared for changes, "The domestication of the apple has gone too far, to the point where the species fitness' for life in nature has been dangerously compromised" (Pollan, 2001 p.52).

But if we allow the natural development of plants, their conversation and establishment of relationships gears in a network of multiplicity in unity (Bortoft 1996). This network is similar to the performance of a jazz melody in which each of the musicians understands the rhythm of the song but at the same time they recreate the song by the way they play their instruments or sings its song. The environment is also shaped by the organism (Hoffmeyer, 1996), the music is created as it is performed; "the world is in its purest sense a creative place" (Hoffmeyer, 1996 p.38).





As in the jazz band “there is no central control, no hierarchy of authority” (Korten, p. 111 2000). It is the understanding of the rhythm common to all the members of the band and its personal interpretation what brings them together and makes it a beautiful piece of art.

The rule is not stability but activity, “You have it, then you lose it again, then you get it again. You have to change to stay the same” (Kooning in Margulis, 2000). In this way the plant, by engaging in meaningful relationships with all those around it and forming itself to achieve those relationships, grows creating new zones of life, becoming an instrument that is immersed in all its environment and has the environment immersed in it, an instrument that you can hear in the song of the kookaburras, the whistling of the wind through the leaves, the voices of the insects, the singing of the frog and all the ones that come together in the space where a forest is created or its soul remains.

Sit down and listen to the sounds of the night

Each animal cry a story

They are the messengers of our ancestors

cited in Moore in Young, 2001 p.130

2.2. Creating a community

*“We must be able to learn and hear to both narratives
and unite them into one meaningful story one which
will ensure that we feel at home both, in human society
and in the living world which we came from” (Hoffmeyer, 1996 p133)*

Up to now I have been explaining the natural and the social separated, joined by a comparison but still separated. I think is time to make a change, to start talking about both of them as they exist in reality, all in one place. If we are talking about how and instrument is integrated in an environment then we should start integrating things from now.

Situate yourself in that forest I have just described. Hear the birds, the insects, the sound of the wind, watch the plants while you are lying on the grass looking at the sky, feel the place with all your senses. It is the place where you were born,

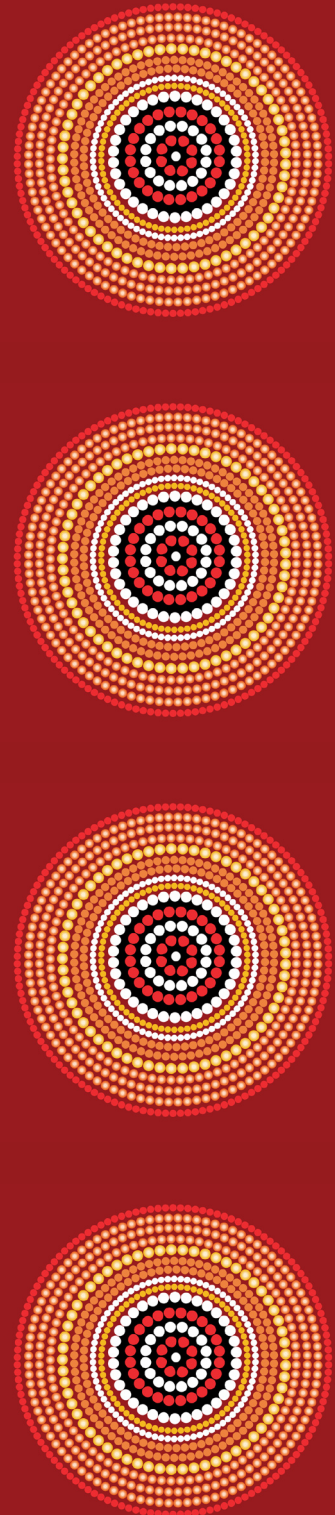
but also the place where your ancestors were buried, where your parents decided to live, the place where your mum used to play as a child, where the old-men and women used to sit around the fire and tell stories, where those fruit trees that you are eating from were raised and from where the wood to make your home was taken. The grass field that you see there is the place where you usually meet your friends to play, but it is also the place where that game which your village's team won, was played; it is the music of the band that mix with the other sounds of the forest, it is that big festival that each year is celebrated to remind everyone that one day, the old ones, the first-ones decided to make that place the place where their sons and daughters could enjoy life, and to remind them that in all those years the memory of this place has been growing with the life of all and had become more and more significant.

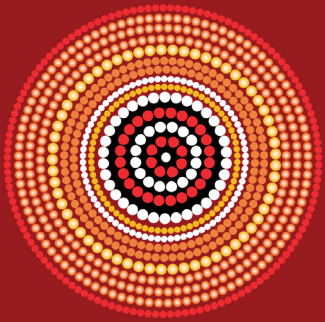
A sacred site and the story behind the site has a lot of things the white man doesn't understand. If a person went and showed him a site, like a piece of rock or tree, that tree or rock alone would have a half dozen of songs behind it and the story travels from a certain place to another area and it has connections with other Aboriginal tribal laws. (Scrutton in Wright, 1998).

How did things happen so that the people and the place decided to be together, to form a unity in which a meaningful life could be possible for all? If you ask each person probably you will realize that each one has a different story to tell and different memories to share of the things that happened in those days, but all of them surely were sharing the natural aspiration of living in harmony. "Each participant group had its own reasons for being engaged" (Korten, 1990 p.3).

If you keep listening to those stories probably you will find how each one contributed to the creation of that place, how some one had some knowledge in medicine and gave a hand when someone was sick or that lady that used to make the most delicious cakes, the man that use to entertain everyone with his stories, and so on.

Proper management of country needs the combined input of men and women, of young and old, if it is to encourage sustainability; and this also needs to bring together people with different spiritual and cultural responsibilities for all aspects of country (Young, 2001 p.18).





They will probably tell you about friends from other places, like the man that brings his vegetables every Sunday to the market or the band that often performs at the festival, or the people from other towns and the volunteers of the fire brigade that come in spring to help with the bushfires.

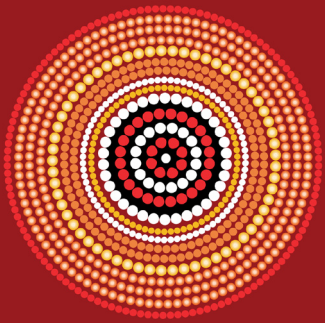
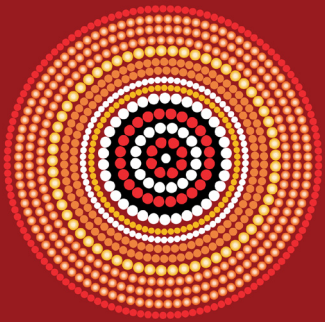
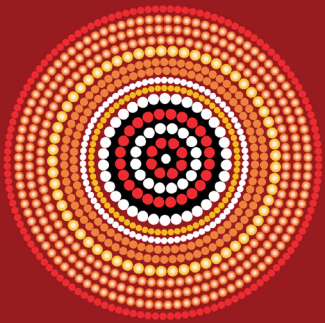
When Aboriginal People and Jervis Bay are mentioned together, most people who know of the area think of Wreck Bay village... Wreck bay has kept its isolated location up to the present day. However, being next to the popular picnic and swimming beach of Summercloud Bay, it has also become a well known place to the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors to the Bherwerre Peninsula (Lowe & Davies Young, 2001 p.262).

The place that we have just went through is not only a forest or a village, it is the dreams, memories and relationships of many people, it is something alive and can be something that gives life to other areas as well.

“This place, Bundarwa, is important because it is related with all other places in our country here. It is like a web which branches out and all things are related, from hunting to ceremony to religion. For thousands of years our people have lived on this land- and if we cannot have that, something will die within us” (Lowe & Davies Young, 2001 p.262).

Then, what bring the people together are links that exist among the people and the land and the relationships created among the ones who belong to that land. As it is said by Halladay (Campfens, 1997) what lights up the world is the feeling we usually have of our links with it and what joins us to other people. In that interaction people are shaped by the place and the place is shaped by them, while the needs of everyone are satisfied whenever it is consistent with the conservation of the essential conditions that allow the life of all members and the fulfilment of their aspirations.

Therefore if we want to develop an instrument, call it agreement or handbook, which aims to be suitable to fit into its environment and develop mutually beneficial relationships and integrate it into the life of its members and integrate



them into its life, then we might need to follow similar stages to the ones that occur when a community is created.

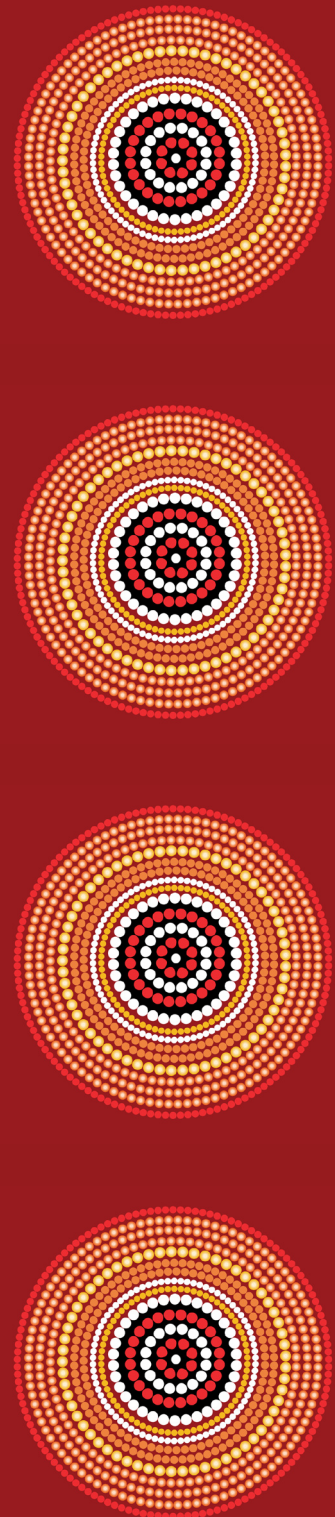
a. The Primary Elements: These are the fundamentals required to start; the place or environment, the people and the agreement. The last one is the result of the integration of the first two elements and the base of further relations. It is the instrument that now will interact independently with its creators and its environment to develop itself in the best suitable way so that all can fulfil their aspirations.

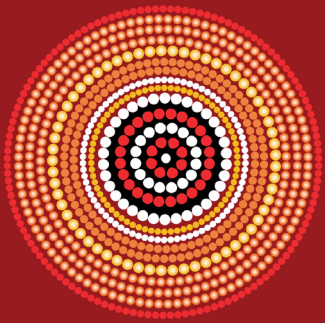
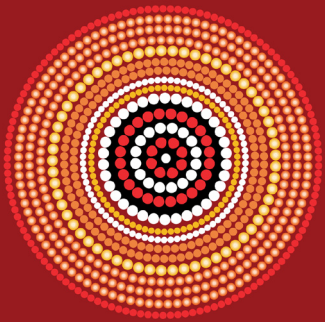
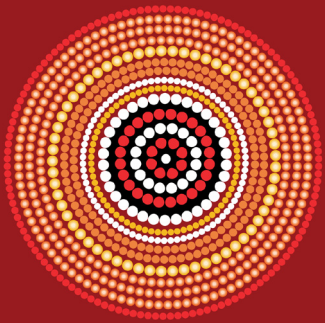
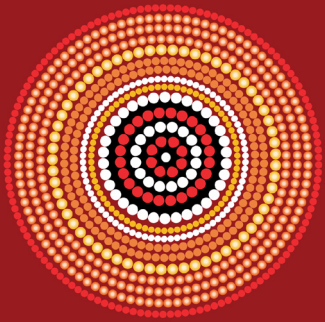
b. The Integration: This is the activity of establishing a dialogue and integrates work forces and expertise to incorporate the interest and resources of the different factors in the environment. This is what (Bond, 1999) mentions as one of the main elements of a process management approach, which includes beneficiary participation in problem analysis, planning and decision making, in resource mobilisation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

This step is about giving to all the elements in the environment the opportunity to contribute to the development of the instrument, to give ideas, intentions and needs to establish which are the things they can give and what the instrument can give to them.

It is a conversation in which the creation interprets the information according to itself and its values and shapes itself to satisfy those needs, if it is possible, or to avoid them, if it is necessary. The instrument as a creature has achieved certain autonomy and now negotiates itself with all the participants and its environment. Not all negotiation is with people.

Indigenous people are also engaged in negotiations with their country. When people negotiate they are advised for win-win outcomes... when Yanyuwa people negotiate with country, they strive to understand and accommodate its needs, so that country will, in turn, continue to meet theirs (Young, 2001 p.251) .





c. The integration of resources: The instrument is to be developed with the existing resources. It will exchange in a reciprocal way what it has or can give in the future, to each of the individuals or factors that approach the relationship, giving and taking in a meaningful way.

The instrument will help create new relationships and therefore it is not advisable to take any function that another participant can perform (Korten, 1990).

As presented in Bond, (1999) institutional support₂ is important in a process management approach, “avoiding bypass and helping to build-up local institutions, with an improved operational environment”.

d. The search for new opportunities: The life of an organism as well as a community is characterized by its continuity in engaging in meaningful relationships with the elements of its inner and outer environment. The more it can become useful for more people the more its continuity is ensured. Korten (1990) when talking about the creation of networks, recommends looking for opportunities to engage new participants.

Nevertheless if the instrument will grow in relationships and strength, it has to ensure that the upcoming relationships are beneficial for all its members, the instrument is not an end in itself, it is only a part of a chain that ensure life's continuity.

At the beginning of this chapter, two stories of a grant submission were presented. A meaningful instrument was the second one in which everyone participated in its creation. It became meaningful for all involved, the people who had an interest contributed not only because they wanted to help but because its existence was significant to them. A simple piece of paper incorporated the aspirations of many people, and became more than a paper to be filled in. It became an occasion to meet people and bring hope to make a change in the living of many and conserve an environment that belongs to all.

Create

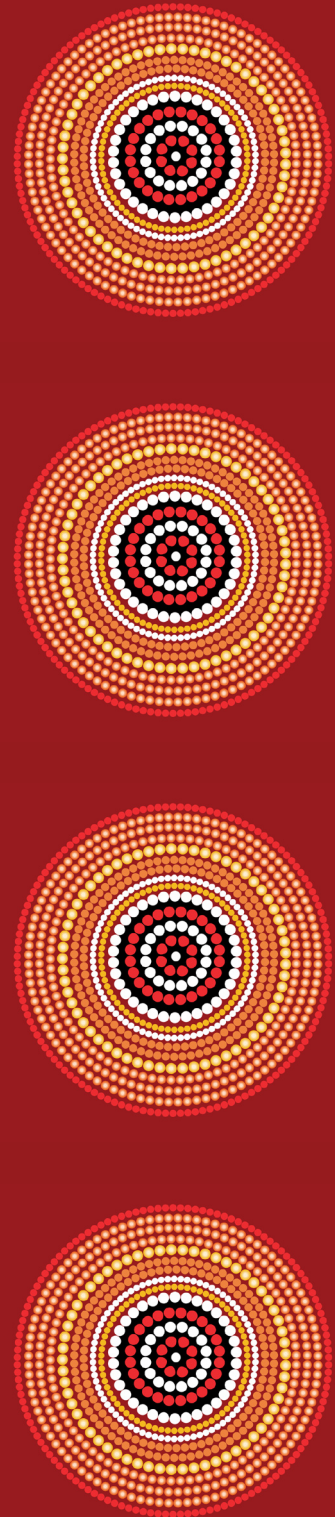
*Dakota children understand that we are from
the soil and the soil of us, that we love the
birds and beast that grew with us on this soil.
A bond exists between all things because they
All drink the same water and breath the same air.
Luthers Standing Bear, My people the Sioux (Suzuki, 1997)*

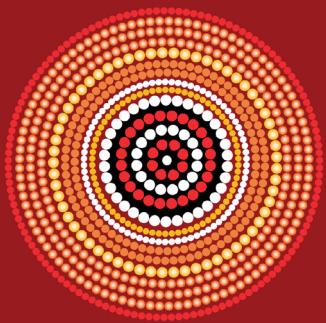
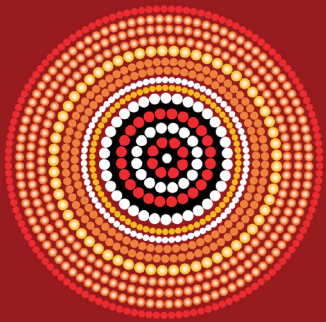
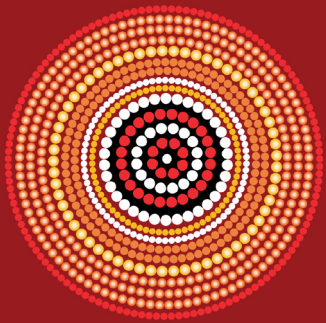
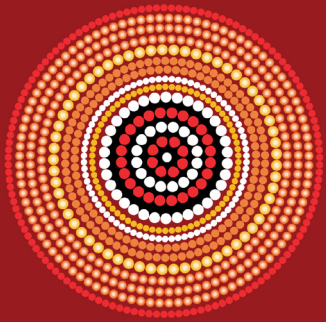
III. The last Stage of our research.

3.1 A self creative handbook

We have arrived at the last stage of the research. In the first stage we went through the stories of the participants in order to understand who they were and what they wanted and with that information we formed categories that contained what was considered essential for each participant. In the second stage we prepared a meeting where those categories were presented and the participants decided on the essential elements of the handbook that were reflected in its objectives and outcomes. In this final stage, the handbook, like a seed, will create itself developing its essential elements contained in the objectives and outcomes.

When I say create itself, I am not just talking metaphorically. Those essential elements setup in the handbook constitute a filter that defines the information the handbook will contain, according to those essential elements defined in the objectives the participants will engage in its creation. The information contained in there will be the result of the interaction of those essentials and the intentions, ideas or other information presented by the parties or gathered in the existing environment.





3.2 The plan (a dialogue)

Having understood the self creative process of the handbook, the first step in the achievement of its objectives and outcomes is the definition of a plan that answers the question on how these objectives and outcomes, by starting a dialogue, are going to be accomplished. The answer to this question is given by responding to the following questions: 'How?', to define task and actions, 'Who?', to decide the people responsible for each task, 'Where?', to situate the task and 'When?', to define time and deadlines (Stringer, 1996 and Gleeson, 2000). The answer of questions is affected by existing factors in the environment, such as capacities, funding or other political or economical ones.

I remember in the meeting that many of the stakeholders highlighted the need to have at least something to show before elections as this will be a good moment to get attention and even more funding. Unfortunately the deadline was too short, and other factors such as unexpected illness of some of the coordinators did not allow this to happen.

Considering the changing environment the research plan has to be designed in a flexible, self creative way allowing the involved to adjust it to the changing situation. As a characteristic it provides times and deadlines but they are approximate and can be adjusted. Even the creation of a plan depends on many factors such as the number of people involved, other actions happening at the same time, or availability of the information (Walsh, 2002).

In the planning of resources it is important to follow certain principles that avoid dependence and allow the participation of everyone in a reciprocal way; Bond & Hulme (1999), provide some principles that we followed in the development and application of the plan:

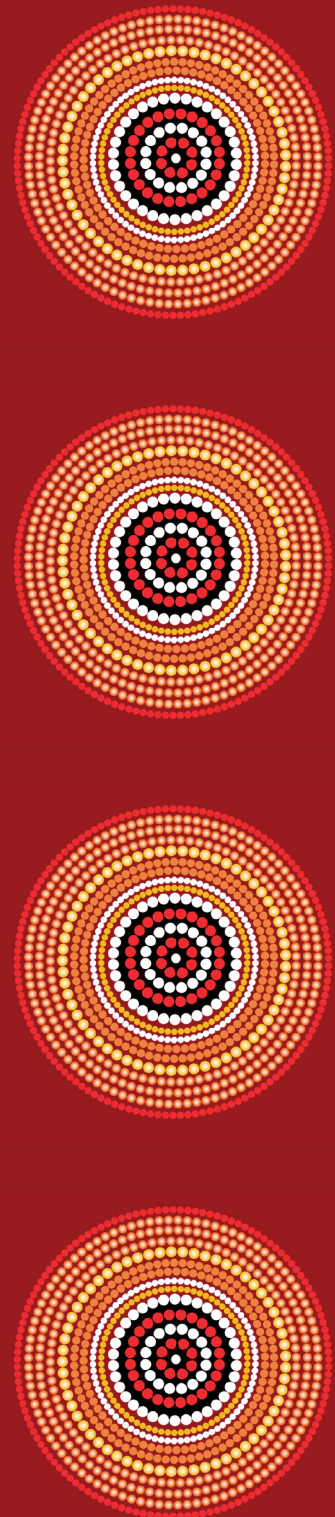
a. Appropriate technologies: This involves, learning from Indigenous knowledge and local environment, and using technologies appropriate to the local context. In regards to this point, first we concentrate in what we have; the knowledge, the law, the people, the resources, and after analysing them and using all the existing tools to create the handbook, then we look to other solutions given by other Aboriginal people that could complement our work.

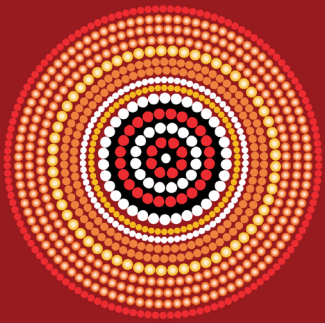
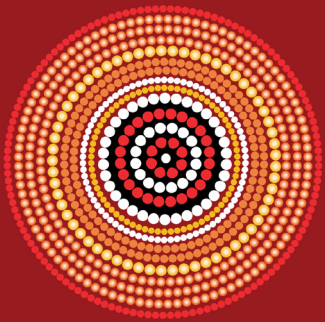
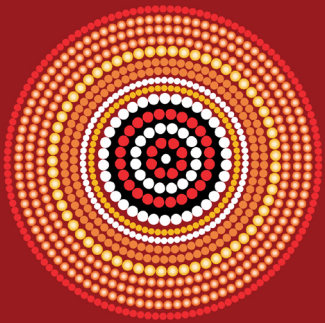
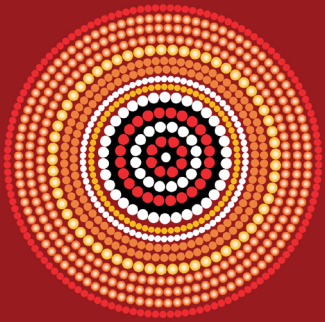
I think this is a big challenge for the researcher. Sometimes we think that because we know about other communities or because we have worked in similar situations, we know the tools that can be applied. But most of the time the resources are there, especially the expertise and the knowledge. After constructing our solution with what we have in our local environment, then we can engage in a dialogue with other experiences,

A focus on the local level does not mean that the complex interaction of other levels with the local community is ignored by community workers (Burket 1998).

By focusing on the local first and then engaging in the global contexts, we are creating a dialogue. A reciprocal relation requires having something to give.

When I started the research for the project, I scanned some literature about Indigenous people and government working with the environment. During the first stage of the process I found that nothing was applicable and also I tried to forget about it so that my understanding of the issue was not framed by any previous conception. When I went back to the literature once I had gone through the interviews and I had a clue on how the handbook was going to be developed, the understanding of the literature was different. I realized the coincidence of certain principles that we followed in our process but in our own way, were





followed also by other communities and that helped me to understand some things better but also to feel encouraged to engage in a dialogue and become part of a bigger network.

b. People involvement in problem analysis, planning, decision making resource mobilization and implementation. The development of an instrument is a dialogue and as in the plants, the most open and varied it can be the better. In this understanding every stage shall involve the intervention of the stakeholders who hold an expertise in that area. In here we are following Aboriginal principles based in respect to the knowledge held by each person, not everyone can speak about all issues. “Aboriginal society obligations are created between people based on their difference, rather than their similarities” (Weiner in Meyers, 1998 p.58).

In the research process Aboriginal Values are researched and developed by the people appointed by the Jagera Committee and with regard to the City Council, attention is set to the views and solutions proposed by each area about their own issues.

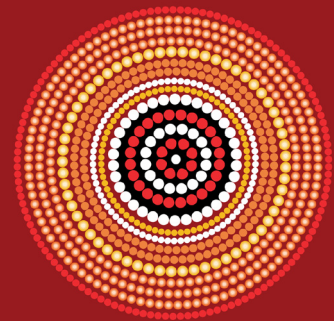
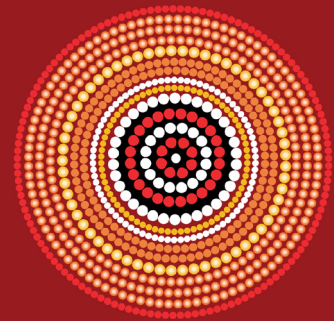
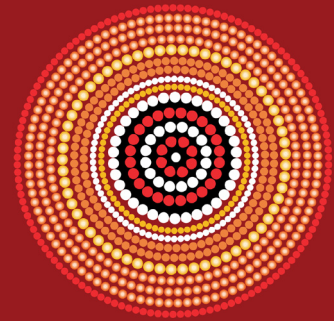
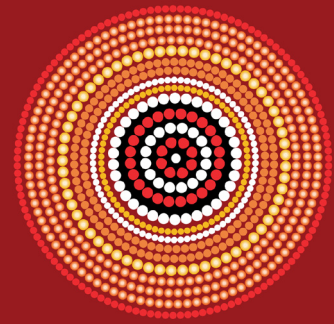
c. Political support. In the case of our research, which looks for the implementation of a policy that engages Aboriginal people in the early stages of planning, political support is crucial. Regarding this issue one of the first meetings was with the policy makers in order to obtain their views and gain support. Many times government stakeholders have advised treating the handbook at the highest level so that resources can be appointed for the achievement of the outcomes.

I remember that in one interview with some of the managers of an area, one advised the Jagera to organize a breakfast or something like that with the lord mayor. He said -I understand the things but the budget comes from decisions taken at the top level.

d. Use of permanent institutions. If we want to ensure the sustainability of the project, the use of permanent institutions is advisable. In this case the foundation in the existing law is one of the main elements used to achieve sustainability. Once a right has been obtained it is hard to loose.

e. Local capacity building. This is about strengthening peoples' capacity to determine their values and priorities, and to organise to act on these and, as Eade (1997) states, this is the basis of development. The handbook brings an opportunity for the stakeholders to be involved and participate in the development of a policy and the definition of guidelines in the implementation of an act, this is certainly capacity building.

"The more a community can rediscover its possibilities for action, taking full advantage of its cultural legacy and those technological advances of modernity that can be used autonomously the less it would need any developmental type of assistance or intervention from outside." (Ranhema, M. 1997 p.394)



These are the results of the application of those principles in the design of the program

Table 7 -8. Program Development

III. Program Development:

The outcomes are expected to be achieved with the experiences of the Jagera and BCC, law instruments and other experiences of different groups in Australia. This will be done in the following way:

3.1 Definition of Cultural Heritage Values (Madonna William): (expected by end of March 2004) This first stage will present a deep study about cultural Jagera values. It is expected that it will incorporate the testimonies and views of the Jagera people. The intention of this stage is to present elements for understanding what cultural heritage means for the Jagera.

3.2 Legislation and Government Structure (Erick Huerta & managers of each areas) (March 15th 2004): This second stage will analyse the different regulatory aspects of cultural heritage, including law and policies as well as how it is applied by the different areas of council. The information will be supported by interviews to key areas of council to obtain their views and ideas about the best process. By this activity triggers and potential triggers will be found.

3.3 Definition of specific process for each trigger (end of April 2004 stakeholders)

3.3.1 Policy planning: How can the Jagera participate in the definition of desired environmental outcomes related to cultural heritage in the city plan and the different planning schemes? Which are the legal instruments that support that? And how would be the best way to do it?

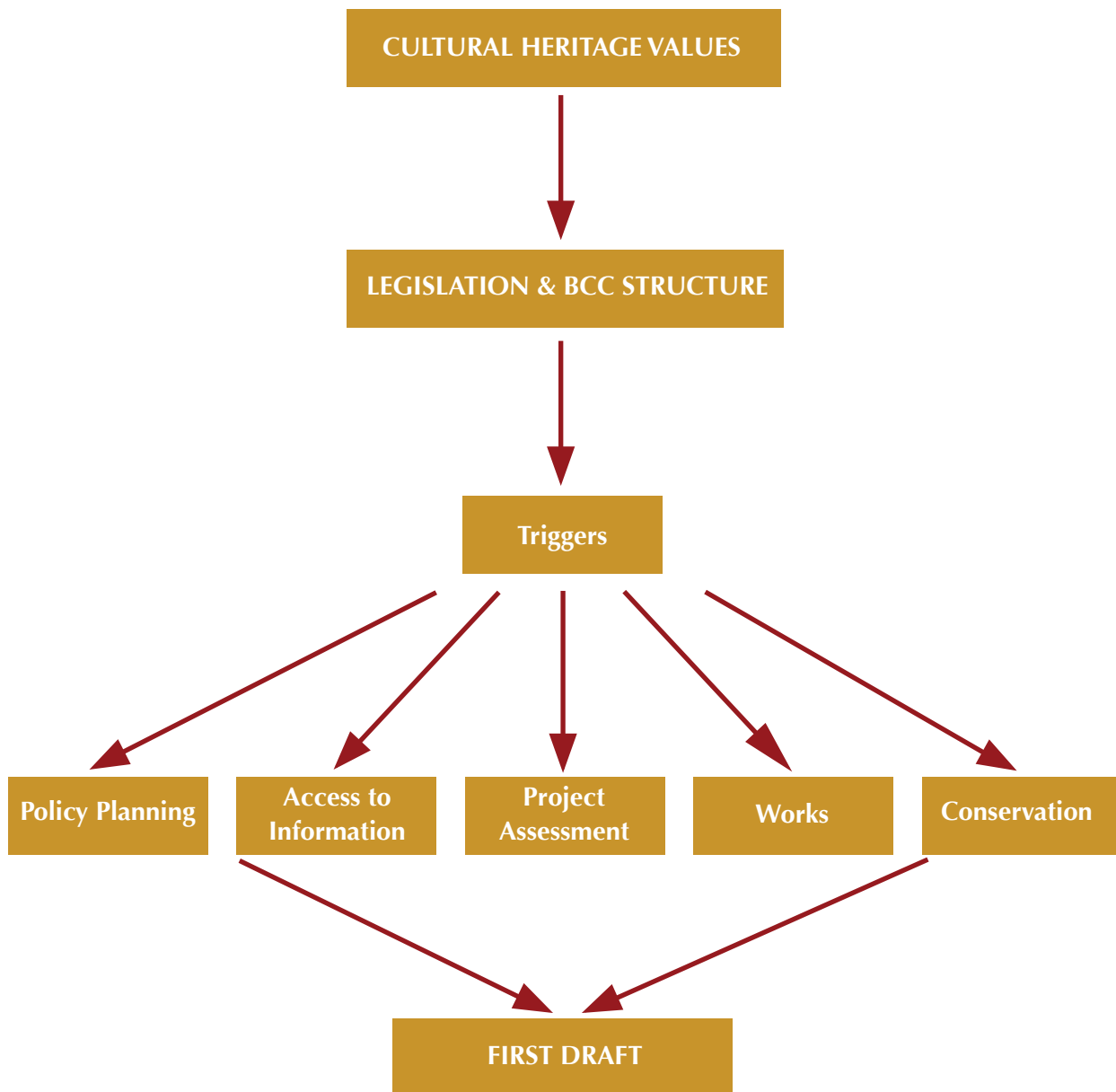
3.3.2 Access to cultural heritage information and register (end of April 2004): What are the principles for access to information that need to be followed according to the Jagera? (cultural heritage unit and water resource team)

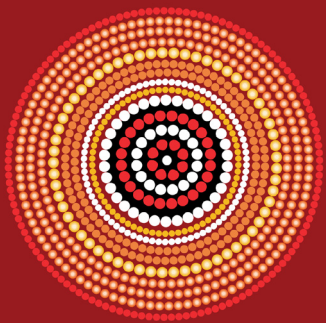
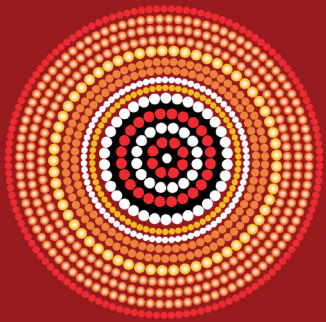
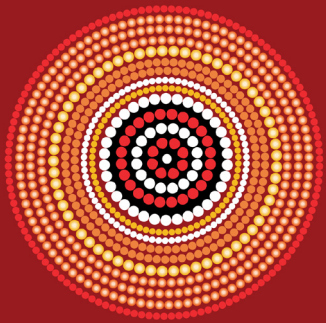
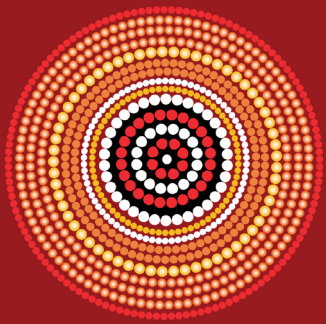
3.3.3 Assessment of Projects: (end of April 2004) When is a Cultural Heritage Assessment needed? Under which principles it has to be done to satisfy Jagera aspirations? What are the requirements established by the law? How would be the best way to do it?

3.3.4 Procedures when artefacts are found: What to do in these cases? Which are the requirements established by the law? How would be the best way to do it?

3.3.5 Conservation: How will the Jagera can work with the BCC in the conservation of those sites? What are the requirements established by the law? How would be the best way to do it?

When this par





3.3 Implementation of the plan.

Now we have our plan, as we can observe, it is expected to be developed under specific stages. Each stage consists of creating particular parts of the handbook by the ones who have expertise in the relevant area. But at this moment everyone already has an idea of each of the topics. During the interviews stories about cultural heritage appeared, the functions of each area of the council were presented and some ideas on how to deal better with cultural heritage were expressed by the participants. Now it is about integrating those experiences into a particular aspect of the handbook, each part will be influenced by the other and will take a shape to match with each other.

In this understanding the first dialogue will be done by the Cultural Heritage study, that will be done thinking about solving the answers required by the participants as well as regarding the needs expressed by the Jagera.

The second dialogue that the handbook started is with the legal environment from which it will incorporate and analyse the law according to its needs and essential elements. Rights, as Ife (2001) affirms, are discursive and therefore are constructed and reconstructed through dialogue. So when analysing Cultural Heritage it is not the Law which is going to tell us what it is.

The democratisation of culture has to start from what we are and what we do as people, not from what some people think and want from us (Freire, 1976 p.81).

On this understanding the Jagera are the ones who define what cultural heritage is for them, and from that perspective the legal analysis is done to find in the legal system which principles and legal instruments protect what is considered by the Jagera Cultural Heritage. A study done in this way brings information that shapes and substantiates Indigenous people's positions in negotiations and provides insights into the culture and strategy of other stake holders (Young, 2001). That is what I liked most from the Law, that it is a creative instrument that is incorporated into every story, looking for justice.

The study of the Law, once it is finished, will engage in identifying triggers which was one of the needs highlighted by the parties, mainly the people from the Council. In this dialogue the results were successful as we found that some triggers were already found in the legislation, although some others needed to be designed, and clarification of procedures added to the existing ones.

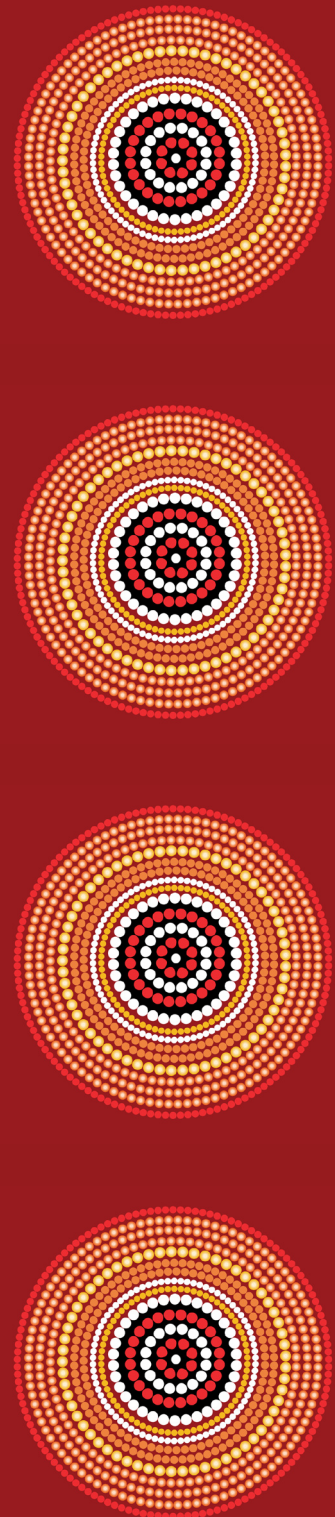
To create these procedures we will need to integrate in them all previous knowledge of cultural heritage values and existing regulation, according to the needs and objectives highlighted by the parties.

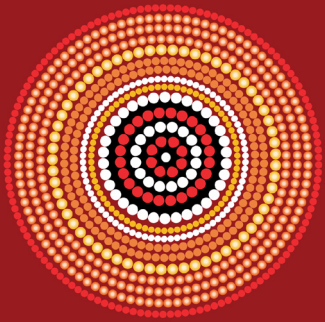
A procedure is a path from a situation to a desired outcome. Then, first of all, it is necessary to define the situation by a clear and general statement that does not limit the incorporation of all the activities that it intends to regulate. Let us say that we have already identified what could be an Aboriginal value or artefact, and explained clearly the duty of care regarding cultural heritage objects or places, then, the procedure can start with defining a situation: What to do if you find an object? This will be followed by an activity. For example: don't touch anything, and then other actions, until we get to the achievement of the outcome, its protection and conservation.

In the development of these procedures parallel activities can be found as prerequisite of others. Let us go back to the example given above, in this case for people working in the field there might be a need for prior training to identify and protect cultural heritage. Then, to the development of this new procedure, we will follow the same steps as in the example above, first the situation and its outcomes need to be identified and then to think about the activities that will take from one to the other.

The success in the development of the procedures relies in the capacity of the participants to understand clearly situations and objectives, as well as in applying their common sense and understanding of how the system works and their previous experiences in similar cases.

Now we have defined the content of our handbook, it is the time to choose the form it will take, therefore it is time for another dialogue about what the involved want to show and the readers would look for. Once this is done it is time to celebrate, and this means as well being conscious of what we learned and





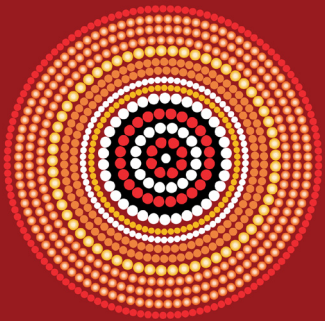
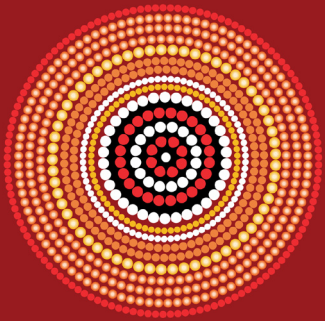
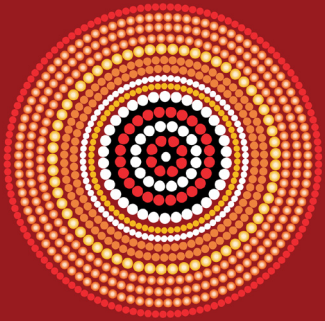
how we did it and what the next step is. This takes us to other creative processes, for instance, implementation and publication, or participation in the design of processes as a broader level.

3.4 Looking for new relationships

Engaging in a broader movement is a necessary step in the creative process and the fulfilment of a reciprocal obligation with those whose information helped us in the clarification of our methods and whose work towards the recognition of human and environmental were useful for the interpretation and incorporation of Indigenous values into national legislation.

I see as important to “actively engage using the links between local and global in the development of ‘transformation and hope’” (Giroux in Burket, 1998). Actually this work is the result of global linkage. Also, since Humans Rights still a discourse of the powerful about the powerless (Ife, 2001), it is necessary that those who are part of Indigenous people movement around the world share successful experiences that demonstrate that things are possible and partnerships among government and Indigenous people can work well.

In an engagement with the Indigenous-world movement, a contribution from the Jagera to the review of the draft of principles and Guidelines on the Heritage of Indigenous Peoples has been sent, and hopefully they will participate in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations 2004 at the UN if funding allows it.



IV. Reflections on Evaluation

A living organism is constantly verifying its behaviour to ensure that it remains healthy. This is necessary for this project too, although the research process of the handbook will not be completed until July, evaluating at this time might help us to correct things if we are going in the wrong direction.

Of course this is only a personal evaluation. Since the construction of the handbook is a developmental project, an evaluation for this sort of work needs to be done by those involved, “from a community development perspective it is the community that makes the evaluative judgement” (Ife, 2002 p.258). Here I present and exercise to review the work done so far.

I would like to do this exercise in two ways, applying the general principles of community development and revising our behaviour as a healthy organism. For the first one I use the objectives of a developmental work as defined by Kelly (2002):

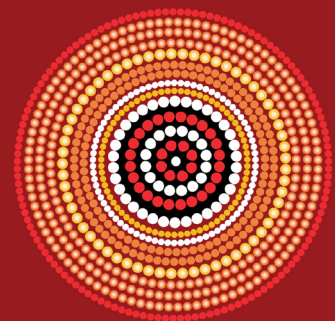
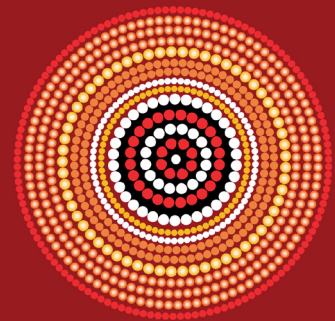
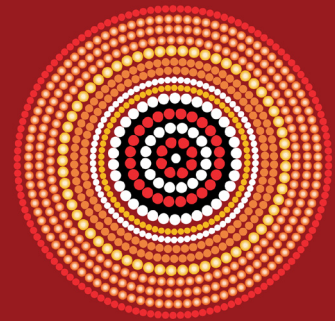
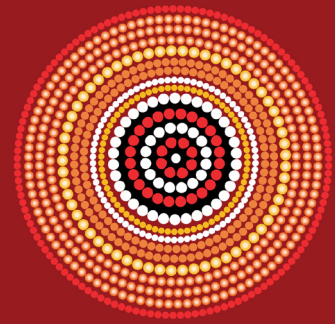
- a. Build relationships: The main task of this activity is about extending the range of peoples relationships (Kelly, 2002).

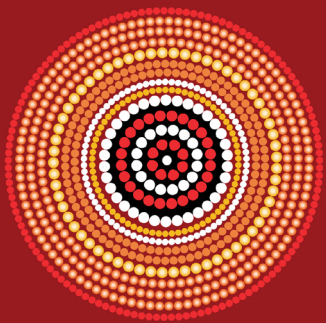
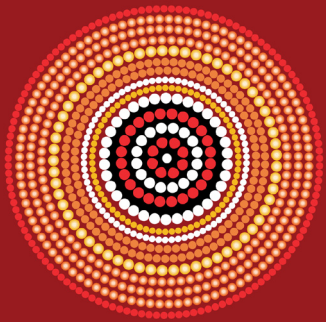
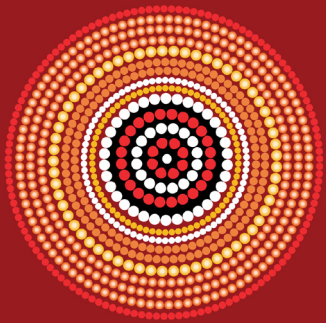
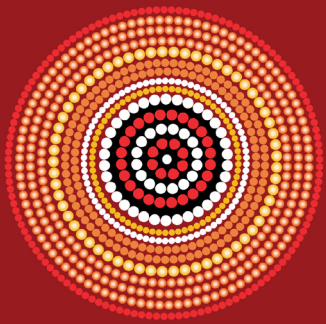
Those communities endowed with a diverse stock of social networks and civic associations are in a stronger position to confront poverty and vulnerability, resolve disputes and take advantages of new opportunities. (Woolcok 2000 p226).

The construction of relationships was also highlighted by some of the participants:

We have good relationships with the developers. It would be useful to know if we can have an ongoing relationship with the Jagera as the one we have with the developers, if this is possible. (BCC interviews)

Regarding this, definitely relationships among the members of the Jagera Traditional Owners and the Brisbane City Council have strengthened. The meetings and the information provided in them had helped to better understanding of the intentions of the Jagera and the way they work. As





well it has been made clear who to talk to when Aboriginal people have to be involved as well the Jagera have personally meet people from other areas of council who now they work together.

It is pleasing to see how the people from the Jagera work together with the council and how the council is happy with this. In one of the interviews some of the participants said about the cultural heritage unit of the Jagera “What I enjoy about working with Madonna and Caroline is that they are conciliatory and you don’t feel threaten, they show an element of leadership in progress”.

The challenge I see is in increasing relationships among other Jagera members and the government so that sustainability is ensured. In the end, as we have mentioned during the work the creation of relationships has to be spread in all directions.

b. Provide new information and understanding of the situation. The main aspect of this statement is not only the amount of information provided but how it is discussed, personalized, evaluated and utilized by the parties.

One of the mains concerns in the development of the handbook was, as said by the Jagera, to ‘demystify’ how government works, and how Jagera works. This important task had been achieved. An example of this is the understanding for the government about what is expected by the law regarding consultation with Aboriginal people in cultural heritage, which is different from community consultation. The first one is about expert advice on how to accomplish the cultural heritage duty of care by the government.

Also, a new of understanding of the regulation of Cultural Heritage from an Indigenous point of view is widening possibilities in the application of the Law towards Aboriginal interests.

c. Generate new resources: The generation of new resources is an essential element of a self-sustainable project which is mainly about avoiding dependence. This was highlighted by the Jagera in the early

stages. Since its beginning, the organisation has always been self sufficient without any dependence on government funding.

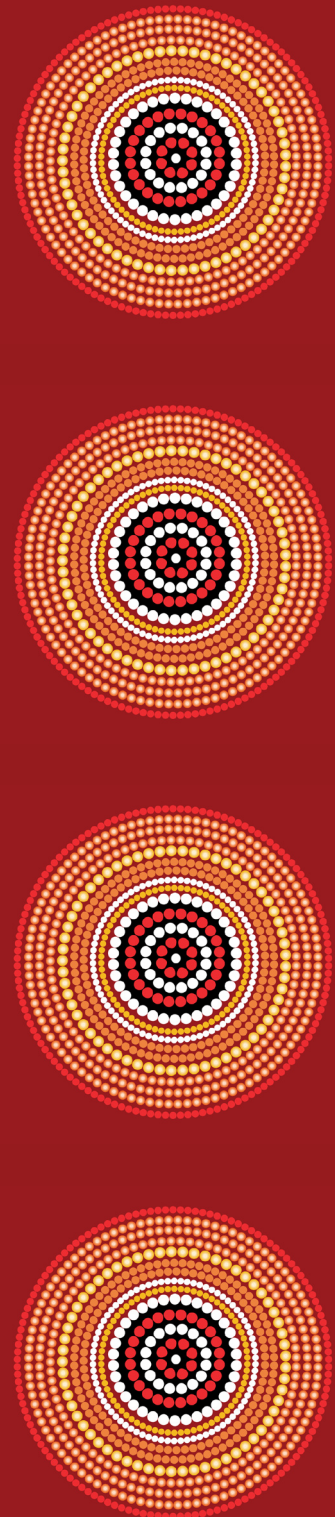
The generation of fresh resources is positive if they come in the context of a relationship which is a genuine partnership that knows and values each others' contributions (Kelly, 2002). In this case the resources of the grant are fully administrated by the Jagera, and the handbook, even un-completed is increasing work opportunities in the area of cultural heritage.

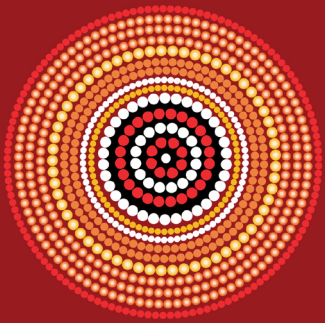
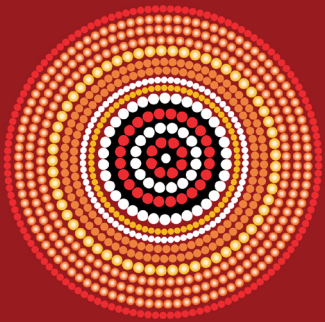
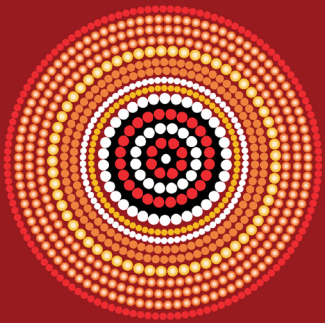
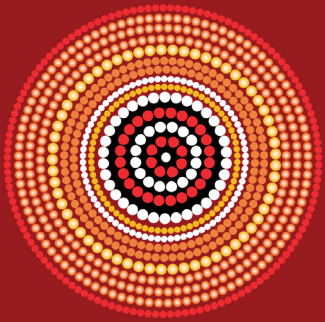
d. Promote people ownership of the process: This is about participation in decision making. The whole project is based on this. By the equal participation in the research process where decisions are taken in equal measures but valuing the expertise of each of the parties we are learning to make decisions in consultation, that is what the handbook is about.

And now thinking in a holistic way, I am happy with what I see, the environment, the place, that now belongs to two cultures is bringing together its inhabitants who are concerned about its conservation. In the same way it is engaging new people like the man who is writing this, who has learnt that this universe is full of spirit.

The exchange is reciprocal, everyone is contributing to the relationships with what we do better. This exchange and development of new relationships is growing, trying to link more people. The challenges are big, the Jagera organisation is willing to grow and that means changes and the need to strengthen its internal structure and allow other members to carry new responsibilities. The new Lord Mayor is from the Liberal Party and this means the constructions of new relationships and the incorporation of new points of view.

And... I am going back to my country. I am not the same, all of us have left something in each other and of course we are all not the same. For me, the world is different, it talks more and I listen more. I can not wait to see my Indigenous friends in my country and my non Indigenous friends too, with whom now I have more world to share.





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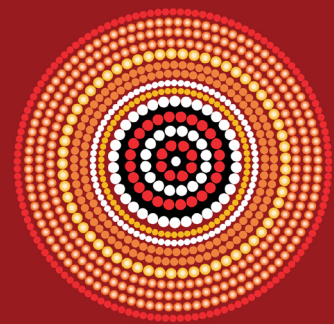
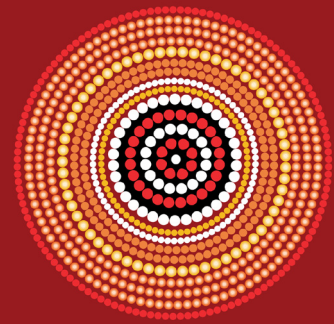
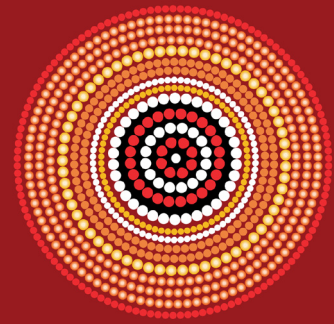
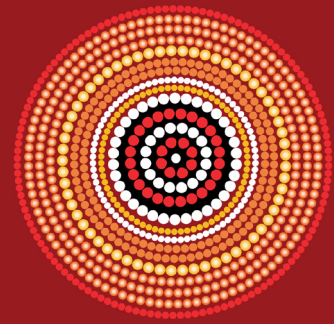
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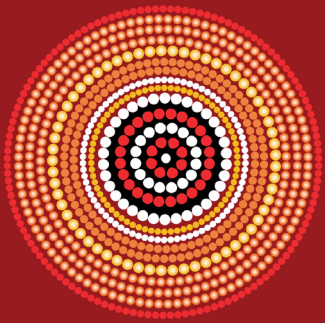
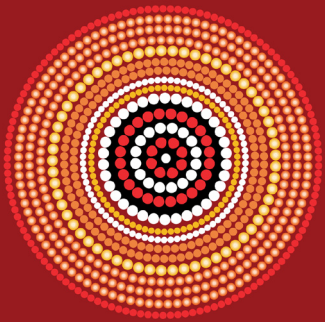
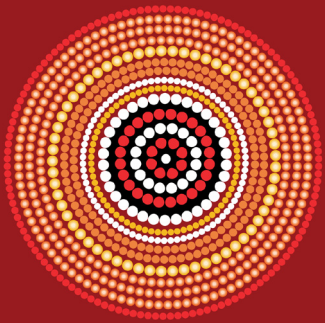
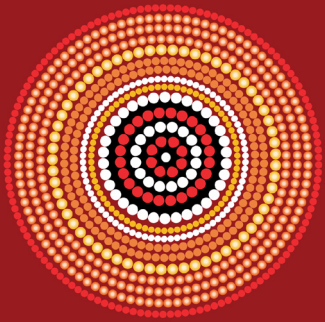
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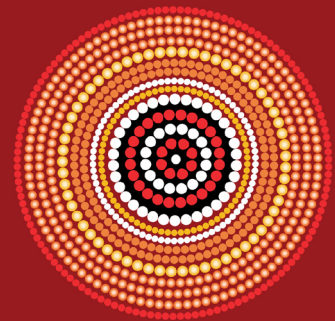
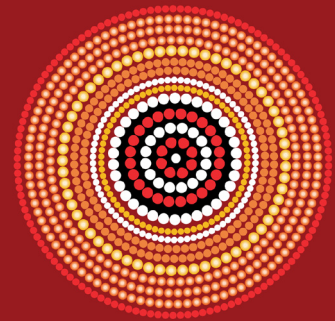
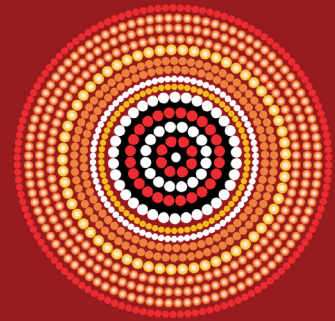
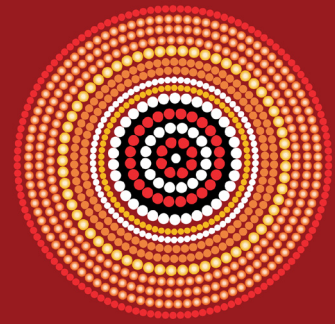
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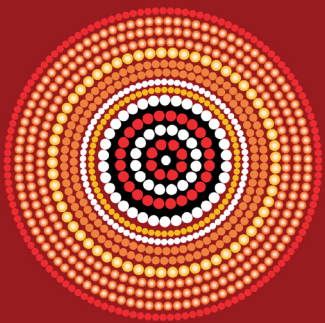
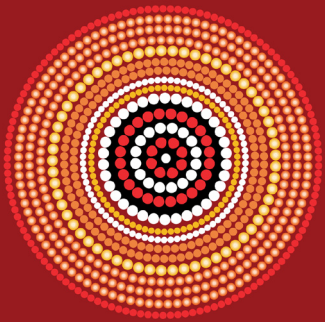
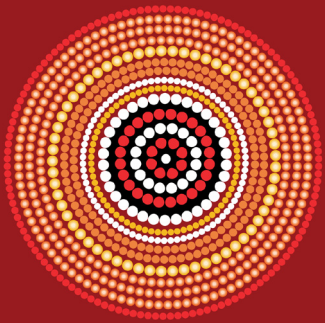
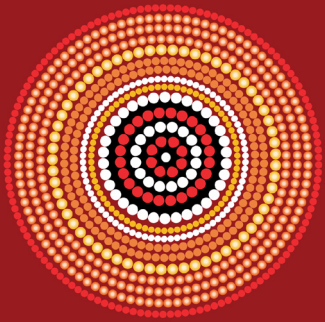
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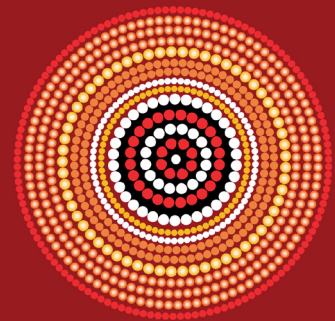
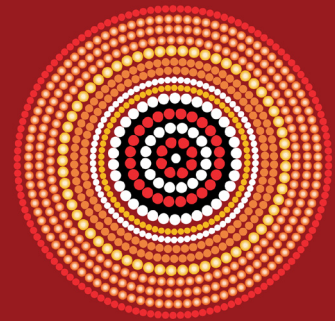
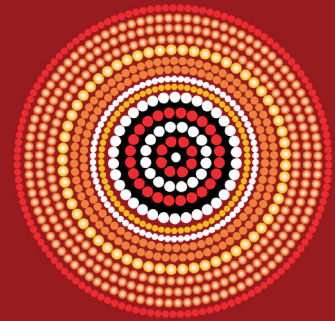
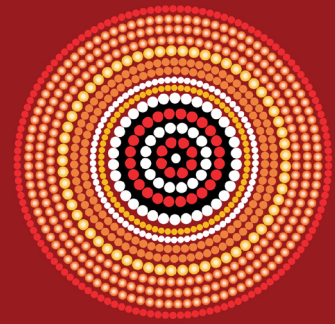
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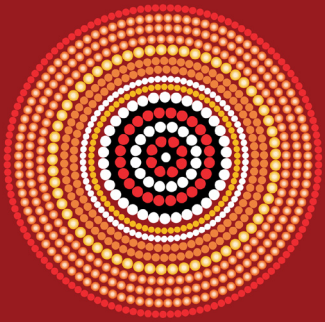
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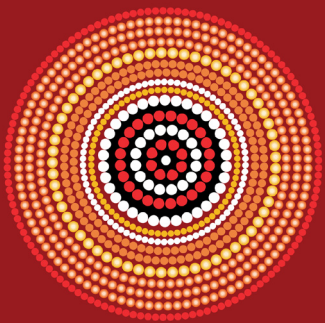
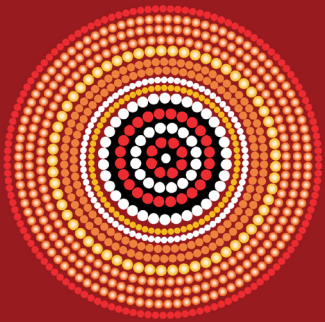
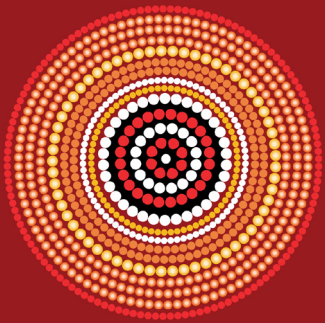
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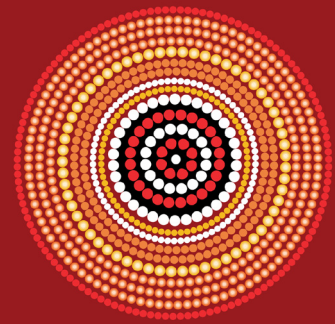
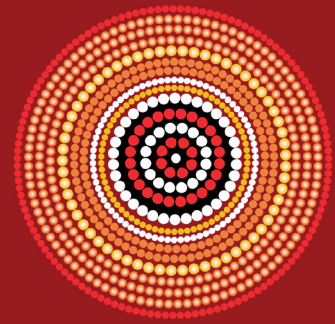
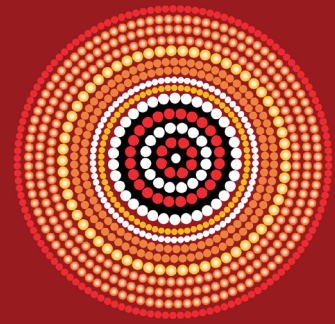
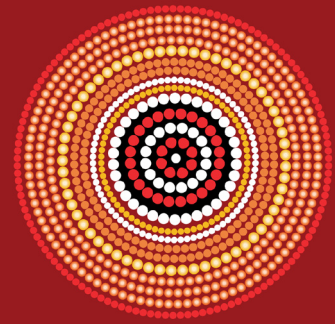
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**My experience in the development of the handbook
for the incorporation of Jagera Cultural Heritage
Values into Brisbane City Planning**

